

Disney's  
free ride in  
Florida

Page 12

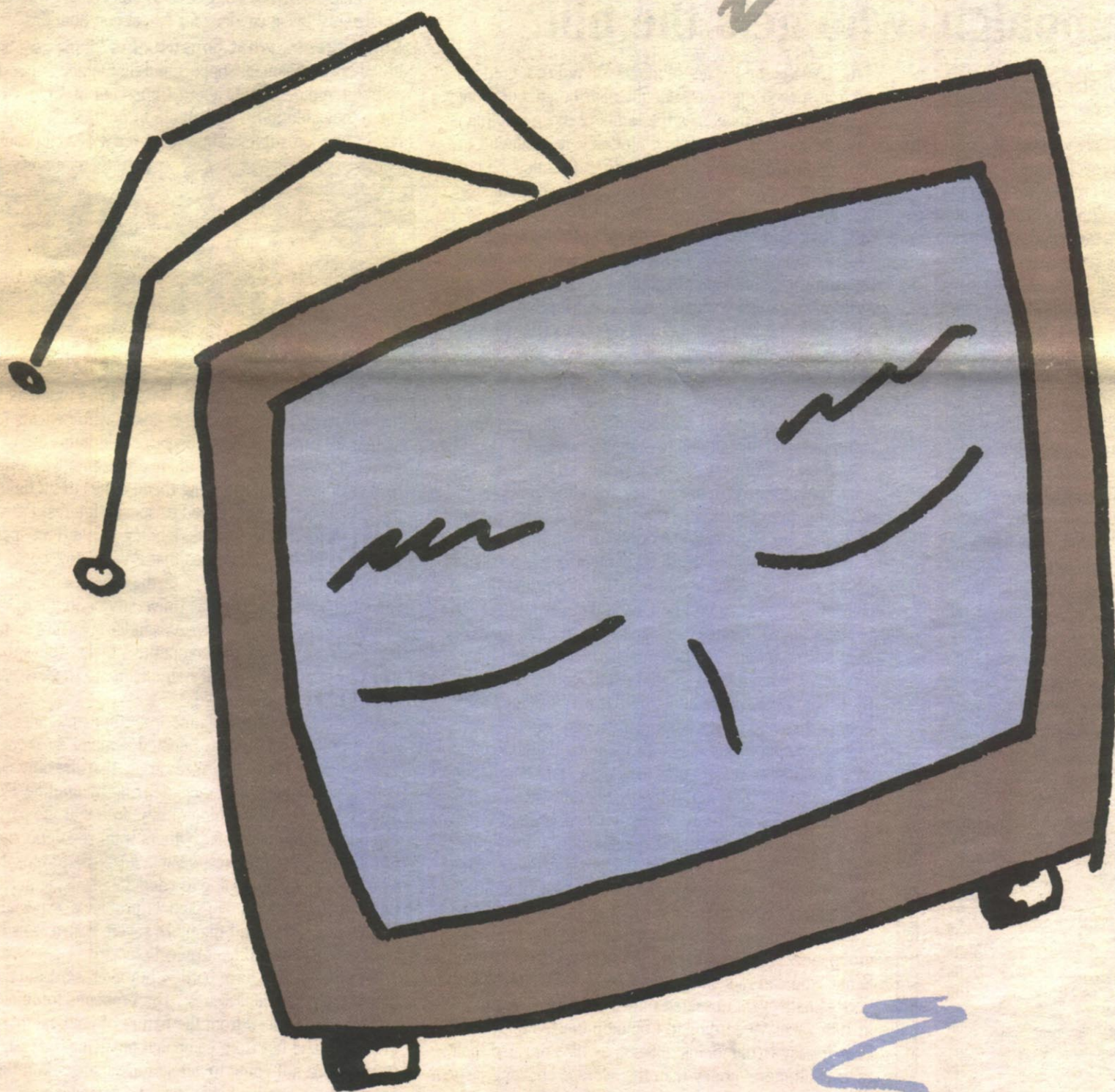
# IN THESE TIMES

VOL. 14, NO. 29

JULY 4-17, 1990

\$1.25

## Broadcast snooze



©1990 Miles DeCoster

**Can public TV  
escape the doldrums?**

**Pat Aufderheide reports  
page 19**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG  
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED





## After the campaign, who gets the bill?

By David Moberg

Political campaigning, never in high repute among most Americans, has in recent years provoked widespread public disgust. This collective nausea springs from many sources: demagogic TV ads (the Willie Horton-ization of politics), soaring campaign costs (adjusted for inflation, Senate campaign spending increased nearly 150 percent since 1972), special influence peddling (such as savings and loan owner Charles Keating's million-dollar contributions to five senators that will cost taxpayers billions), and debased dialogue (ever-shorter TV-tailored sound bites and a wave of the flag instead of Lincoln-Douglas styled debate).

During this time of decline, voting and political participation have plummeted to record lows, congressional incumbents have fortified their redoubts against challengers and the Democratic Party has drifted into confusion. With voters and even many politicians feeling that the system is deeply flawed, campaign reform is again on the front burner. Predictably, Democrats and Republicans are defining "reform" as whatever favors their side. But there are deep differences even among liberal would-be reformers about the real problems and solutions.

Achieving meaningful reform is tough because the nub

of the issue is the impact of money on politics. Political and free-speech rights are equally distributed, but money isn't. And money magnifies the rights of those who have it, distorting democracy into plutocracy. It is difficult to stop people from using economic clout to influence politics, but reformers hope it will be possible to reduce money's distorting power.

**PAC rats and the "soft-money" shell game:** Beginning in the early '70s, Congress required more public disclosure of political funding, provided public funding of presidential campaigns and limited contributions from individuals and political action committees (PACs). The first two measures worked moderately well, the latter poorly: candidates have had to scrounge harder for money, rely more on PACs and invite subterfuge through devices such as parallel, "independent" campaigns and "soft money" contributions to state parties.

Now some reformers are back with a new agenda. The Senate Democrats propose setting spending limits for each candidate, adjusted to the state. Candidates would get 70 percent of general-election expenses from public funding, plus vouchers worth 20 percent of the total to buy TV spots (stations would have to offer prime time at their lowest rates). In addition, candidates would get special reduced postage rates and receive extra funds to offset hostile independent campaigns. They would have to raise 10 percent from small, in-state contributions. There would be severe limits on PACs, soft money to state parties and independent campaigns.

Senate Republicans reject all spending limits. Republicans would also give greater leeway to state and national party activities than would the Democrats but would eliminate PACs and more tightly limit tax-exempt groups. They also favor boosting individual contribution limits instead of providing public financing. Many conservatives outside Congress now push the cynical ploy of limiting the number of terms members can serve.

Common Cause, the most vocal citizen election-reform group, also sees the current system as favoring incumbents, who can raise money more easily than challengers—challengers unseated only 2 percent of incumbents in 1988 races. According to Common Cause Lobbying Director Jay Hedlund, incumbents in 1988 finished their races with more money than the average challenger spent. The group favors spending limits, PAC restraints, "alternative resources" (including public funding) and a ban on soft money.

**The unstable pillars of reform:** Yet some other liberal reformers share the view of political consultant Don Rose, who argues that "spending limits will, as they have already, produce new ways of getting around them or tend to lock in incumbency." Likewise University of Virginia campaign-finance specialist Larry Sabato calls spending limits "the silliest reform of the decade." And

University of California at San Diego political scientist Gary Jacobson argues that "limits on spending, unless set so high as to be meaningless, will inhibit challengers." Challengers need a substantial threshold level of money, these analysts argue, to overcome the advantages of incumbents even if they can ultimately spend less than the incumbent and still win.

"All the pillars of current reform are wrong, systemically pernicious," argues Curtis Gans, director of the Center for the Study of the American Electorate, an independent research and advocacy group. "We don't have too much money going into politics." Gans says the big issues are whether challengers can get enough money to offer real competitive choices, whether money buys contributors access and influence and the use of money for demagogic TV campaigns. Gans argues that the Democrats have proposed limits lower than the amount most successful challengers in recent years have spent.

There are similar disputes over other pillars of reform. Liberal Democratic pollster Stanley Greenberg is among many reformers who see the soft-money contributions as strengthening parties. He argues that "stronger parties play a function in democratizing politics and as a shield against private interests" who are buffered from direct influence on candidates. But Hedlund argues that such money, often donations of \$100,000 raised by presidential-campaign functionaries, "is not being used to build party structures. They're just being conduits for fat-cat contributions."

**Constituents, what constituents?** If the goal is broad-based financial support, public funding is the only solution. Although only about 10 percent of Americans claim they voluntarily contribute to politics, Greenberg's recent opinion surveys show 58 percent of Americans

## INSIDE STORY

support public funding. Support rises to as much as 70 percent when public funding is linked with benefits such as free TV time. Overwhelmingly people in his focus-group discussions felt that "their representatives are going to Washington and forgetting them, either to fill their pockets or become obligated to special interest PACs." These people thought public funding would limit spending, although they suspected that PAC money would find its way into politics one way or the other. Some public-spending advocates such as University of Southern California professor Herbert Alexander favor public-financing floors—to guarantee competitive races—but no ceilings on spending, since "it's an illusion to think that spending can be controlled."

Although TV remains unimportant in many races, tube-reliant politics has clearly boosted demand for money. Consequently, many reformers argue that the only way to control spending is to reduce demand by limiting TV time or by providing a bloc of time free that the parties can allocate to candidates. Others want restrictions on formats to minimize irresponsible ads. One proposal would limit all advertising to candidate "talking heads." But free TV raises some practical problems, especially in large urban areas, and the more severe restrictions encounter First Amendment objections.

Many of these reform battles, however, skirt the most difficult, fundamental issues. "The problems [of American politics] are derived from the nature of political divisions in society and not from campaign financing," says Jacobson. "You're not going to get serious change until the nature of the conflicts changes" and provides new, more coherent bases for strengthened political parties. And as long as there is gross economic inequality, politics cannot be completely insulated from its effects. Easier voter registration and public financing could do "an enormous amount of good," says Gans, "but will that substitute for a Democratic Party that currently stands for nothing? No." But if politics seemed relevant to more people, then the power of money to shape political outcomes might decline as well.

## CONTENTS

Inside Story: Split vote on electoral reform .....	2
Gregor Gysi: the new face of East German socialism .....	3
In Person .....	4
In Short .....	6
Contras look toward life after disarmament .....	7
Democrats and quotas .....	8
European Parliament tackles Vietnam policy .....	11
Disney's free ride in Florida .....	12
Editorials .....	14
Letters/Sylvia .....	15
Viewpoints: Disturbing issues behind the "right to die" .....	16
Ashes and Diamonds by Alexander Cockburn .....	17
Life in the U.S.: 3rd rate 2 Live Crew, 1st Amendment .....	18
In the Arts: Public TV tunes out big picture .....	19
Classifieds .....	23
Close to The Pledge .....	24

(ISSN 0160-5992)

Published 41 times a year: weekly except the first week of January, first week of March, last week of November, last week of December; bi-weekly in June through the first week in September by Institute for Public Affairs, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647, (312) 772-0100. The entire contents of *In These Times* are copyright ©1990 by Institute for Public Affairs, and may not be reproduced in any manner, either in whole or in part, without permission of the publisher. Second-class postage paid at Chicago, IL, and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *In These Times*, 1912 Debs Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054. This issue (Vol. 14, No. 29) published July 4, 1990, for newsstand sales July 4-17, 1990.



By David Lindorff

## Gregor Gysi: the new face of East German socialism



Gregor Gysi: determined to keep the socialist ideal alive in a united Germany.

**G**REGOR GYSI, THE NEW CHAIRMAN OF EAST Germany's Communist Party, is hardly the model of a modern major commissar. Short, balding and sporting wire-rimmed glasses that enhance his already shy, bookish appearance, Gysi in fact personifies the dramatic shift that has taken place in what was once called the German Social Unity Party (SED). Last December 9, the SED ousted its old Stalinist leaders, changed its name to the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) and placed Gysi, an attorney who made his name defending dissidents, in the new post of chairman.

The 41-year-old Gysi belies his shy appearance. A man with a quick smile and a ready sense of humor, he leapt at the chance to take charge of the original party of Karl Marx and to rescue it from the dustbin of history to which its sister parties in Hungary and Czechoslovakia seem already consigned.

Gysi took over the PDS with a rousing acceptance speech in which he called for a thorough repudiation of the party's Stalinist past and a commitment to democratic principles. But while party stalwarts—who last December actually entertained a motion to disband the party—may have cheered, East Germans were largely unimpressed. In national parliamentary elections on March 18, the PDS—which still nominally has over 2 million members—netted only 16 percent of the vote, with the East German Christian Democrats and their conservative allies gaining a majority.

Since that election, the two Germanys have moved rapidly toward unification, with currency union—actually a takeover of East Germany's economy by the West German Deutschmark and the federal Bundesbank—this month, and political union as early as December or January.

Gysi was interviewed in late May, after studies began pouring in suggesting that economic union would be a disaster for East Germany's economy—with up to 50 percent of the workforce becoming unemployed—and after various groups of workers, including teachers, farmers, factory workers and women had separately demonstrated against the rush toward unification.

The interview, conducted in German, took place in East Berlin's International Press Center, because the party, bereft of state support, had abandoned its palatial headquarters on Marx-Engels Platz and moved to smaller quarters in (appropriately) Karl Leibknecht Haus on Rosa Luxemburg Platz.

**People in the U.S. are saying that socialism is dead. You obviously do not believe this. Could you explain your view of socialism?**

**Gregor Gysi:** Yes, I understand, naturally. But a future socialist society in which each individual can freely act according to his own abilities is a dream of mankind that cannot disappear, any more than the Christian ideal. It also occurs to me that, as you surely know, whenever Christianity has come into power, it has led to dangerous and unpleasant turmoil.

In any event, the socialist ideal is much too strong and too vital to go under. Moreover, I believe that humankind requires new social structures. We have begotten false interests, which nonetheless have an economic basis. These false interests are dangerous because

they conflict with the interests of humankind. Humankind can transcend them, though. For example, the arms industry is not normally interested in disarmament. Industry in general, with few exceptions, normally has no interest in ecology. Its interests are economic. Private property is interested in itself and certainly not in social justice. And the transnational concerns are not really interested in a just world economic order. It remains undeniable, however, that one-fifth of humanity lives at the expense of the other four-fifths.

When one takes all these issues together, I say that if humankind wants to survive—and I suggest that we have a chance—then we must create new structures that produce new interests. Right now, humankind's interests must always battle against the dominant interests. It is not possible for that situation to endure, however. That is for me the way for democratic socialism—and that we have never had.

**What did you have here in the GDR before "the turning"?**

I must say that in the last years the SED had become reactionary, conservative and no longer left. That's an objective fact. It doesn't mean that it is what the members, the individual members, either wanted or perceived. That's an important distinction. That is, it's no discredit to the members of the party, but rather it is an objective observation in hindsight.

**You mean the GDR was not in any way socialist under Erich Honecker?**

Yes. It was certainly not a true capitalist society, but neither was it a socialist society, because we never had socialist ownership of the means of production. We had no people's property. We had state property, and indeed, we had an absolutely centralized organization, where property was concentrated into unbelievably centralized control. It had evolved into less a capitalist than an absolutist state. In a sense, the GDR's state capitalism was the highest form of private property, with all production in the hands of one person.

**Could something have been done to prevent the overthrow of the party and the government in East Germany?**

Yes. If in 1985, when Gorbachov came to power and began *perestroika* in the Soviet Union, the government of the GDR had begun an earnest process of democratization and social reorganization, then democratic socialism would

have had a chance here, but [when it was finally attempted] it was too late.

**Might it be said that what is happening in East Germany now, with the monetary union, is a new Anschluss, only with the West Germans attacking with money instead of weapons?**

Naturally, the interests of the capitalists in the West are clear. They hope here to find a new market, they hope to cheaply acquire machines on secure real estate, they hope for cheaper labor, and they hope through the GDR to open the East to the mark: Poland, the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and so on.

What has happened is all wrong. Instead of first joining the economies [of East and West Germany], the political and social problems

**"The socialist ideal is much too strong and vital to go under."**

should have been solved. And it's all happening too fast. When other countries with similar economic systems have been joined, there were first years of preparation. This is all happening in a few months, and the two systems are totally different.

Why is it happening this way? They [the Western capitalists] knew that creating the mark economy first would destroy the Eastern economy. That's what they wanted to happen.

We said that there should be economic union last. But since we can't stop economic union, we must concern ourselves with the social rights of the East German people. We want steps taken so that the costs will not be so great. Couldn't they have been less?

Don't misunderstand me. We are in favor of a market economy. But we want it introduced in stages, and with certain boundaries, so that the GDR economy is not bankrupted but rather gets a chance to become effective and to stand in the world market. I know that it's too late to do anything about it. The possibility existed to do it, but this kind of thing now has to be formulated in the subjunctive.

**I noticed that in the local elections on May 6 the PDS did rather well in some areas. I think you were the winners in five out of 11 Berlin districts and in a number of cities outside Berlin. How did that happen?**

Well, first of all, we didn't win; we were the top vote-getters. I would argue that it's a matter of our having campaigned well and having

had the right candidates in those places. I would also say that it's because people are worried about the future, and they are voting for the party they think will protect them. But I can't give one reason because there was no particular type of place where we did better than others.

**It does seem, doesn't it, that you did better in cities than in rural areas?**

I suppose that in general the rural areas are more conservative, but also we were, after all, more concerned with the urban areas, so we did more there.

**Is there a role for the PDS in the politics of the GDR today?**

There will be. There will be. Do we have a chance? We'll try. We don't have a strategy developed yet, but we will by the fall.

**What about in an all-German election? Would you compete? And if you did, would you get the necessary five percent of the vote to get seats in the parliament?**

The PDS is not an all-German party. We have 2.3 million members, but the PDS is not represented in West Germany right now. It will take time, and this time we don't have time. We will participate in the election though. I don't know if we will get five percent in the first election.

**What is the future of the PDS in a unified Germany?**

I'm not too sure. The PDS can play an important role to the left of the SPD [Social Democratic Party] as a truly left social-democratic party. A party to the left of the SPD is something that has been missing in the Bundesrepublik because there was the GDR. It wasn't missing in Italy or in other lands. It's time for something like that in Germany too.

**Do you see the PDS entering into a coalition with the SPD, either in the national government or in any of the state governments? The SPD in East Germany has said it will never govern jointly with the PDS.**

Look, you have to let some time pass. Remember, when the Greens first entered parliament [in the Bundesrepublik], everyone said "Never!" to the idea of coalitions with them. Yet now they have no difficulty working with them in Berlin and other regions. Let's give the SPD a little time. They'll coalesce with us. They want to be far away from us right now, just as they wanted to be far from the Greens once.

**What is the difference now between the PDS and a social-democratic party like the SPD?**

We are more radical in our demands for reform, especially compared to West German social democracy. That cannot be said in terms of international social democracy—just in the West German context, yes? Furthermore, we aren't just interested in reforming the system but rather also in developing the necessary new social structures I discussed earlier. The Social Democrats aren't doing that. We belong to the communist, socialist, democratic, humanist movement. We follow Marx, but also Kautsky, Bebel and Gramsci.

**Do you see a time when the PDS will be part of the German government?**

Perhaps in 100 years or so that could happen, but not for the present it won't. (*Gysi leans forward and smiles conspiratorially.*) Perhaps things will happen a little more rapidly!

**What do you think about the future of the party in the Soviet Union?**

There is now an earnest attempt in the Soviet Union, with *perestroika* ... [to create] true

*Continued on page 10*



By Joel Blum

## CIA prototype

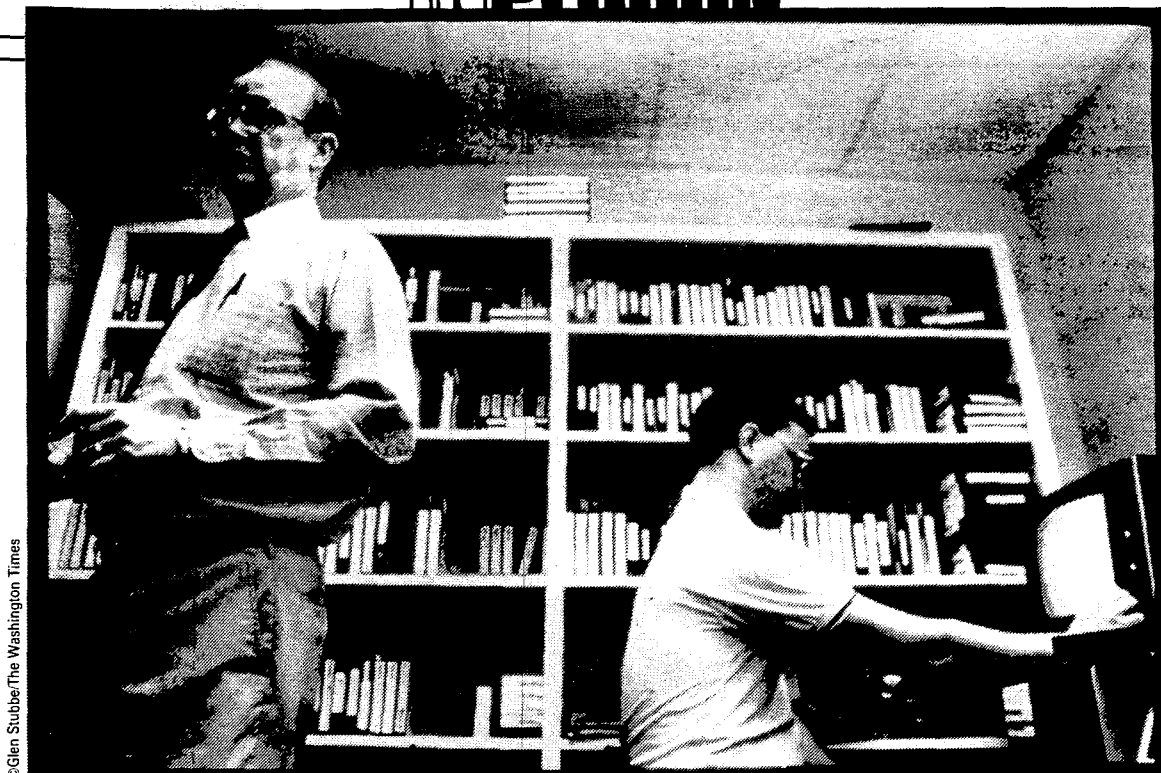
The U.S. role in the Indonesian army's 1965 massacre of an estimated 500,000 Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) members and sympathizers had political reverberations far beyond the 13,500-island archipelago in Southeast Asia. As I reported in last issue's column, journalist Kathy Kadane of the States News Service recently provided evidence that U.S. diplomats and CIA officers operating out of the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta provided the Indonesian army with a "who's who" of the PKI leadership. According to Joseph Lazarsky, deputy CIA station chief in Jakarta in 1965, embassy officials used their copy of the list to check off the names of the PKI leaders subsequently captured and killed. "We were getting a good account in [from current-President, then-General Suharto's Jakarta headquarters] of who was being picked up," Lazarsky told Kadane. "The army had a 'shooting list' of about 4,000 or 5,000 people." Howard Federspiel, who in 1965 was the Indonesian expert at the State Department, explained to Kadane, "No one cared, so long as they were Communists, that they were being butchered. No one was getting very worked up about it." What counted was that populist President Sukarno was sent to the sidelines and General Suharto and his cohorts were running the country.

**Part of a plan:** The annihilation of the PKI—described in 1968 by the CIA itself as "one of the ghastliest and most concentrated bloodlettings of current times"—and Sukarno's overthrow were to serve as a model for subsequent U.S. suppression of popular movements. (Details of the CIA cabal can be found in Peter Dale Scott's summer 1985 article, "The United States and the Overthrow of Sukarno, 1965-1967" in *Pacific Affairs*.) In a 1981 article in *The Nation*, abridged by CIA censors, ex-CIA agent Ralph McGehee wrote, "The agency was extremely proud of its successful [one word deleted by the CIA review process] and recommended it as a model for future operations [one-half sentence deleted by CIA]." That recommendation was apparently heeded. Former Ambassador to Indonesia Marshall Green told writer Tad Szulc of a 1967 interview he had with Richard Nixon. Green said, "The Indonesian experience had been one of particular interest to [Nixon] because things had gone well in Indonesia. I think he was very interested in that whole experience as pointing to the way we should handle our relationships on a wider basis in Southeast Asia generally, and maybe in the world."

**The Phoenix Pogrom:** In 1965 the man in charge of the CIA's Far East division, and thus responsible for overseeing Indonesian covert operation, was William Colby, who later became CIA director under Nixon and for a while under Ford. Speaking of the U.S.-prepared "shooting list," Colby told Kadane, "That's what I set up in the Phoenix Program in Vietnam—that I've been kicked around for a lot. That's exactly what it was—it was an attempt to identify the structure [of the Vietnamese Communist Party]." Colby is being disingenuous. The two operations, though similar in intent, were not the same. In Vietnam, the CIA, in addition to preparing the lists, oversaw the subsequent killings. In 1971 Colby told a House government operations subcommittee that, between early 1968 and May 1971, the Phoenix Program was responsible for the extermination of 20,587 alleged Vietcong.

**Call them irresponsible:** The events in Indonesia also had their corollary in Chile. Just prior to Salvador Allende's election in 1970, Henry Kissinger told the National Security Council, "I don't see why we need to stand by and watch a country go communist because of the irresponsibility of its own people." As in the Indonesia of 1965, after Allende's election in 1970, the U.S. simultaneously destabilized the economy with the help of CIA-connected, U.S.-based multinational corporations, mounted an intensive propaganda war, cut aid for developmental assistance while increasing aid to the military and, according to a 1975 Senate report, compiled "arrest lists"—lists the CIA claims it never turned over to the Chilean military for use in its post-coup slaughter.

**List makers:** As ex-CIA agent Philip Agee observed in *Inside the Company: CIA Diary*, "Every CIA station maintains Subversive Control Watch Lists of the most important left-wing activists." In *The CIA: A Forgotten History*, William Blum provides a few examples of where CIA list-making skills were put to good use. After the July 11, 1963, coup in Ecuador, the junta used the CIA's Subversive Control Watch List to capture and imprison "communists" and "extremists." In 1965 in Peru, that country's military used the CIA's list of "subversives" to round up those guerrilla supporters who lived in urban areas. In the mid-'60s in Uruguay, the CIA compiled dossiers on South American political exiles who had



©Glen Stubbie/The Washington Times

At American Family Association offices, Rev. Don Wildmon oversees operations while son Tim edits violent segments from a *Miami Vice* episode onto one tape. Behind them are videocassettes of all prime-time TV programs from the past three months.

## Don Wildmon: He's no Jim Bakker

By Frederick Clarkson

Rev. Don Wildmon is a family man, perhaps even a patriarch. Six family members work for him at the organization he heads, the American Family Association. He is also one of the most powerful, effective and least-understood leaders of the religious right. To oppose him is to need to know him. He has been called the "Ayatollah of the Airwaves," "nut-case" and "Puritan prude"—and worse. To the electronic media and the publishing industry, the 50-year-old reverend is the foremost advocate of censorship in America.

Don Wildmon is hardly a household name, but almost everyone has heard about the controversies to which he is a party. In the past few years this Mississippi-based United Methodist minister has spearheaded efforts to stop federal funding of "obscene" or "anti-Christian" art. It was Wildmon who brought Andre Serrano's "Piss Christ"—a photograph of a plastic statue of Jesus in a bottle of the artist's urine—to the attention of Congress and the media. And last week Wildmon was in court defending himself from charges of libel and copyright infringement brought by New York artist David Wojnarowicz, whose work Wildmon excerpted in an anti-NEA fundraising letter. He has forced such major advertisers as Ralston Purina, General Mills, Domino's pizza, Clorox and Noxell to not sponsor the "offensive" TV shows on his hit list. Pepsi dropped a \$5 million ad campaign featuring Madonna under pressure from Wildmon. In 1989 he cost NBC \$1 million by leaning on would-be sponsors for *Roe vs. Wade*, a docudrama about the Supreme Court decision guaranteeing a woman's right to abortion. His successful advertiser boycotts—and threats of boycotts—have fundamentally altered the television industry. And Wildmon hasn't peaked yet.

Rev. Donald E. Wildmon—he likes to be called Don—executive director of the American Family Association (AFA) of Tupelo, Miss., is, of course, married and has four grown children. His wife Linda teaches Bible school and home economics. He was born, raised and spent most of his adult life in small Mississippi towns. His mother was a public-school teacher, his father a venereal-disease investigator for the state Board of Health.

When he was nine, he says, he discovered "the Lord had a special mission for me." In college, he thought the Lord had called him to evangelize in Africa but he had doubts that he was right for the

ministry. After having "loafed," as he puts it, through Millsaps College in Jackson, Miss., he was drafted. After two years at an Army base in Georgia, he entered the seminary at Emory University in Atlanta, his doubts resolved. It was 1963. After receiving his master's of divinity degree, he pastored small-town Mississippi Methodist churches for 12 years. Then came the epiphany that changed his and his family's life.

As Wildmon tells it, he was watching TV with his family at Christmastime 1976. "On one channel was profanity," he recalls. "We changed the channel and found adultery. We changed again and found violence. So I just became very angry and decided I would do something."

So in 1977, Wildmon founded the National Federation of Decency (NFD) in Tupelo, Miss.—the hometown of Elvis Presley. (Elvis died that same year.) Originally operated on a shoestring out of his home, the NFD has since become the American Family Association and claims an annual budget of \$5 million. What began on the fringes of parochial obscurity eventually found the light in the risen stars of Jerry Falwell and right-wing direct-mail czar Richard Viguerie. Fame brought high-profile success—and failures. By 1987, NFD was apparently in financial trouble due to declining contributions in the wake of the Swaggart-Bakker scandals. Wildmon folded NFD and reopened as the trendier-sounding AFA.

Skipp Porteous, a leading Wildmon critic, doesn't buy all the folklore about epiphanies, shoestrings and budget crunches. When he visited NFD in 1986, Wildmon owned a brand-new office building, since expanded, filled with top-line office equipment, including a mainframe IBM computer organizing mailing lists, tracts and direct-mail offers, a printing press and a room full of video equipment monitoring the networks.

Porteous, who edits *The Freedom Writer*, a newsletter about the religious right, for six months headed an official but imaginary chapter of NFD. He visited NFD headquarters and met with Wildmon and his staff. "Don was running around all over the place with his shirt sleeves rolled up," says Porteous. "He is no country bumpkin. He is sophisticated, witty and works hard. He is very impressive and indefatigable. Some people run things from their desks, but he is into everything, getting his hands dirty."

By the second day, the NDF had checked Porteous out further and realized they had been had.



He found himself in a room with Don, Don's brother, two reporters and the Tupelo chief of police. The confrontation was brief. Wildmon was cool and "unflappable" throughout. "I just left," says Porteous, "and headed for the Tennessee border as fast as I could without breaking the speed limit."

Wildmon shares none of the flamboyance, rehearsed telegenicity and conspicuous consumption of the TV preachers. He looks like a cross between Robert Young of *Father Knows Best* and Sen. Jesse Helms. He lives relatively modestly on a \$50,000 salary that he supplements by leading "Christian tours of the Holy Land." Andrew Miller, national commander of the Salvation Army, says, "Donald Wildmon is a sincere, devout Christian. His ministry is marked by intensity and integrity of spirit."

Though his work with AFA is "under special appointment" of the Methodist bishop for northern Mississippi, Wildmon claims that AFA is not affiliated with the Methodists. The distinction is thin, but Wildmon is, in any case, no conventional Methodist. He is on the "steering committee" of a secretive, interdenominational theo-political movement called the Coalition on Revival (COR). Other COR leaders include Rev. Tim LaHaye, former Rep. Mark Siljander (R-MI), Religious Roundtable head Ed McAteer and televangelist James Kennedy.

In her 1989 book *Spiritual Warfare, the Politics of the Christian Right*, author Sara Diamond identifies COR as the cutting edge of "Biblical Reconstruction," the "concept that Christians are biblically mandated to 'occupy' all secular institutions," a concept which has "become the central unifying ideology of the Christian right."

**Kiss his ring:** As a COR steering committee member, Wildmon signed a "commitment sheet" in which he agrees to let "Christ be the total, absolute, monarch-king-lord of every area of your life ... including finances, time, energy, family, sexuality, business, honesty, career, marriage, entertainment, recreation and health matters" and requires that he be "willing to be martyred for Jesus Christ and the establishment of His Kingdom here on earth" and "willing to submit to the hierarchical order that God has created in which we are willing to submit as to Christ [emphasis added], to employers, civil government and church leaders, and within families, wives to their husbands and children to their parents."

Most evangelicals in this century have been pre-millennialists, Christians who believe it is not possible to reform the world until Jesus returns. The minority post-millennialists believe Christians must build the Kingdom of God in the here and now. COR, which is organized by post-millennialists and politically motivated pre-millennialists, seeks to diffuse theological resistance and stimulate participation in U.S. politics. COR now has a pilot project to take over local government in California's Orange and Santa Clara counties—phase one of a 60-city, five-year plan.

Wildmon's notions of TV's anti-Christian bias, distorted family values and poor representation of the Judeo-Christian tradition are rooted in the COR agenda. There is nothing "Judeo," however, about COR.

Through it all, Wildmon insists that he is not a censor. "I am not interested in getting shows off TV," he told *USA Today* in 1989. But a 1989 AFA goal was to "force three series off the air" that the group charged depicted "homosexuals in a positive light"—*Heartbeat*, *Hooperman* and *thirtysomething*. AFA also scared advertisers away from two racy mini-series, *Crimes of Passion II* and *Scandals II*, preventing both from going on the air. AFA says it "helped convince" Matchbox Toys to drop its Freddy Kruger dolls. Wildmon sees himself in a struggle in which "the very foundation on which Western civilization is built is at stake."

Thus the reverend targets anything that falls out-

side his Christian worldview. "I think that network television programs are the single most destructive force in our society today," he said in an interview with *The New American*, a publication of the John Birch Society. Wildmon also says, with some justification, that network shows usually depict Christians as "con men, ripoff artists, adulterers, murderers, cheats, liars, thieves" and more.

**Shared concerns:** Many beyond the religious right, such as TV critic Tom Shales and even some network executives, agree that prime-time luridness and bad taste have gone too far. Wildmon has been able to extend his influence in part because others share his concerns about salaciousness and violence on TV and the role of pornography in society. For example, conservatives and feminists in mainstream churches who find themselves deeply divided over abortion rights often agree on pornography—though not always for the same reasons. Most recently Wildmon has been able to tap anti-government sentiments by attacking the National Endowment for the Arts over funding of alleged anti-Christian and obscene art.

From the beginning, Wildmon's base has been the religious right. NFD hooked up with the Moral Majority in a broader entity called the Coalition for Better Television. And when he created the AFA, he also created a new, more mainstream group called CLEAR TV (Christian Leaders for Responsible TV). Wildmon is the linchpin of CLEAR TV. One of the broadest and most powerful religious coalitions ever assembled, claiming as members 1,600 Christian leaders, CLEAR TV has roped in much of the American Catholic hierarchy and half of the Methodist bishops. Though its grass-roots support is hard to measure, AFA claims that it has more than 500 chapters and distributes more than 400,000 copies of the monthly *AFA Journal*. But the economic and political potential represented by CLEAR TV is sufficient to command the attention of big business and national media.

Wildmon's adversaries, to their detriment, often underestimate him. They think he is a rube, an ignorant right-wing vigilante. But he has held his own in debates with the likes of Phil Donahue and CBS Vice President Gene Mater. Wildmon uses perceptions and misperceptions of him to his advantage. For example, his Methodist credentials and manner, when he chooses to use them, allow him to bridge cultural and theological gaps and bring respectability to his issues and allies.

Though Wildmon is often pigeonholed as an obscure moralist, he is in fact a top religious-right leader who has been on the boards of such groups as the Council for National Policy, Christian Voice, the American Coalition for Traditional Values and the Coalition for Religious Freedom.

Last year, however, Wildmon's bright future took some tarnish. *The Freedom Writer* and People for the American Way each issued reports detailing Wildmon's anti-Semitism. He insists, for example, that the problem with the media is not immorality per se but the "secular humanist value system" of those who own the media. And who are these people? Mostly Jews, who, according to Wildmon, "intentionally and by design" produce "anti-Christian" shows and films. Consequently, Wildmon lost some supporters, notably Catholic Archbishop John May of St. Louis. A lesser—or more famous—figure might have been finished. But Wildmon is a survivor.

Last year Wildmon wrote in the *AFA Journal*, "Back in my younger days I reached a conclusion that the worst thing that could happen to me would be to come to the time of death and realize that my life had made no difference." You can rest easy, Don. □

**Frederick Clarkson** is a Washington, D.C.-based journalist who has written extensively on the religious right.

taken refuge there and then sent that information to CIA stations in the exiles' home countries. In 1975 in Bolivia, the CIA provided the Bolivian government with files on foreign priests and nuns who were speaking out about human-rights abuses by the military dictatorship that had just come to power with the help of the CIA. And in the first half of the '80s, ex-FBI agent Frank Varelli revealed that the bureau had prepared lists of Salvadorans who were being deported from the U.S. and then sent those lists to the Salvadoran army.

**Back in Indonesia:** Nothing much has changed in Indonesia since 1965, except that now there are fewer communists to kill. According to Amnesty International, in 1990 the Suharto regime executed four political prisoners who had spent 24 years in jail for their alleged involvement with the PKI. In fact, since 1985, 20 people have been executed for their alleged role in the coup or for membership in the PKI. These deaths were a product of Indonesia's formal judicial system. That was not the case, however, with the so-called "mysterious killings" of some 5,000 Indonesians during the "anti-crime" campaigns of 1983-86. President Suharto writes in his 1989 autobiography that these deaths were in fact officially sanctioned summary executions of suspected criminals. Not to mention the slaughter that has gone on in East Timor.

**Unearth those skeletons?** Kadane's article caught the eye of Rep. Ted Weiss, Manhattan Democrat. He wrote a letter to Rep. Anthony Beilenson, Hollywood Democrat and chair of the House Select Committee on Intelligence. The letter read in part: "Although the events occurred more than 20 years ago, I find the allegations contained in [Kadane's] article absolutely astounding. Especially disturbing is the fact that U.S. officials were apparently unconcerned that their actions may have resulted in thousands of deaths. I know you share my concern about human-rights abuses, especially in cases where involvement by U.S. officials has been alleged. I hope the Intelligence Committee plans to examine the allegations contained in this article. If the charges are credible and can be substantiated, I urge you to carry out a thorough investigation." Intelligence Committee Staff Director Dan Childs told me the committee is looking into the matter. "At Congressman Weiss' request, we are undertaking a preliminary staff investigation and doing some interviews which have not been completed yet. It is not clear at this point where it is going, and we won't know until we have completed our preliminary staff investigation."

**A U.S. education:** Perhaps Congress should also take a look at current U.S. support of Suharto. According to the Defense Department's budget request, *Congressional Presentation for Security Assistance*, "Indonesia ... is a source of valuable raw materials. Indonesian political stability and economic growth owe much to the government's pragmatic policies. Indonesia has played a constructive role in international affairs as a generally moderate voice in the Non-Aligned Movement, Association of Southeast Asian Nations and OPEC." This year the Suharto regime will receive about \$47 million in aid from the U.S. As in 1988 and 1989, \$1.8 million of that money is allocated to International Military Education Training (IMET). This Pentagon program awards Indonesian army officers with scholarships to U.S. institutions of higher warfare learning: the Navy War College, the Army War College, the Air War College and the U.S. National Defense University. Between 1950 and 1989, IMET has trained 7,012 Indonesian military officers. In addition to providing continuing education, IMET gives the Indonesian officers a chance to swap strategies with their counterparts around the world, such as those Salvadoran officers who, last fall, upon completion of their IMET studies, returned home and killed six Jesuit priests, their cook and her daughter. Religious News Service reports that the name of one of those six, Father Ignacio Ellacuria, rector of Central American University, is to be found on a November 1987 enemies list prepared by the Conference of American Armies. The conference, which brings together military representatives from 15 countries in the hemisphere, including the U.S. and El Salvador, accused Ellacuria of supporting the "objectives of the communist revolution."

**George's blood brothers:** Perhaps Congress should turn its legislative scalpel on the CIA. Blood doesn't stain only the souls of those who cooperate with death-squad governments—it also leaves its mark on those who authorize the funding. And it is not just against the living that crimes are committed but against future generations who must live with the tyrants who have been propped into power. This thought seems particularly pertinent on this July 4th, which might have been a day like any other if during the American Revolution the CIA had been in the service of George III and the East India Company—making lists.



## Visions in red

By banning the importation of Cuban art, the Bush administration has arbitrarily violated both the First Amendment and the Free Trade in Ideas Act, claims a suit brought against the administration by the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee (NECLC) last month. According to the suit, the embargo deprives Americans of significant, fresh and stimulating works of art, thus abridging the right to knowledge. The Free Trade in Ideas Act of 1988 exempts "informational materials" from the Cuban trade ban. It marks the first time Congress has made an exception to the 1963 Cuban trade embargo. The Treasury Department's decision to exclude paintings from the act means that Americans are allowed to buy a photograph of a Cuban painting but not the painting itself. "Paintings are as much a part of the First Amendment as books," says NECLC General Counsel Michail Krinsky. "[Paintings] are not, as the administration would have it, commodities like Cuban sugar or tobacco."

## A campus guide to rape rates

A bill that would require colleges and universities to release campus crime statistics has been approved by a House education and labor subcommittee. One in six female students is the victim of rape or attempted rape each year, reports *Congressional Quarterly*, but the outcomes of disciplinary proceedings against suspects are considered part of a student's record and kept confidential under current law. "Under existing law," says Rep. Mel Levine (D-CA), "a rape victim has no way of knowing if her attacker is still on campus."

## For the child's sake

More than 40 children have been killed in automatic garage door opener-related accidents since 1982, reports the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). And the Association of Trial Lawyers of America (ATLA) is calling on the commission to ensure that manufacturers raise the now-feeble safety standards of the devices. The CPSC currently recommends that owners of garage door openers test them by placing a two-inch-high wooden block in the path of the descending door. If the door doesn't automatically ascend after striking the block, disconnect the opener until it can be repaired or replaced.

## Protecting our boys

Mere defects cannot stop the U.S. Army from buying CH-47D Chinook helicopters, reports the *Baltimore Sun*. The Army has apparently been unable to fix a variety of defective parts on the copters, which a one-year congressional investigation blames for the deaths or injury of 21 servicemen since 1984. A draft report by the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations obtained by the *Sun* attributes a series of air catastrophes to the failure of the Army Aviation Systems Command to respond promptly to complaints from Chinook flight crews.

## A double-edged tuna can

Flipper isn't safe from those evil tuna fishermen yet. Because of the May announcement by Heinz, Van Camp and Bumble Bee that they would stop buying from fishers who also trapped dolphins in their nets, U.S. boats will have to move from the eastern Pacific to the western Pacific to find dolphin-free tuna schools. But the western Pacific schools tend to be composed of younger tuna essential for species replenishment. Meanwhile, foreign boats—whose crews are neither government-monitored nor trained in dolphin-saving—will move into the eastern Pacific.

## Poorer still

Approximately 1.2 billion people—nearly one-fourth of humankind—now live below the threshold of basic needs, according to Alan B. Durning of the Washington, D.C.-based Worldwatch Institute. "More than 200 million people have joined the ranks of the poor since 1980," reversing a 30-year downward trend, says Durning in the spring issue of *World Watch* magazine. Durning describes a "poverty trap" that includes environmental degradation, external debt, population growth and inequitable development policies, and he claims that growing inequity between and within nations has resulted in a world where the richest billion people earn 20 times as much as the poorest—two-thirds of whom are under the age of 15. Without international and national accords to reduce debt dramatically, concludes Durning, poverty will continue to rise in the '90s.

## When Defense Department moves in: there goes the neighborhood

Ed Robbins could tell that his neighborhood was going bad.

"They flew their helicopters in one night at quarter to 10, turned off their strobe lights so we couldn't see them," says Robbins, a Nevada rancher and former Air Force man. "They came right up to our houses, and next thing we knew they had trained their landing lights on us, shining in our faces as we lay in our bedrooms. Young kids with brand new toys—thought they'd harass us to have some fun. They came so close to getting shot it wasn't funny."

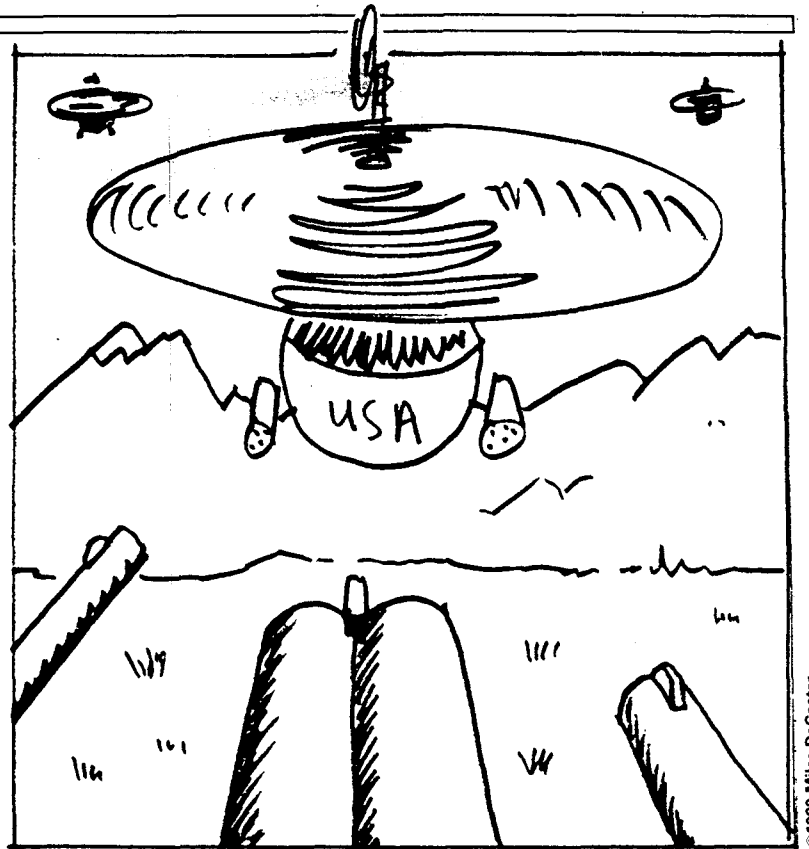
Robbins, who was forced to flee his 320-acre ranch in central Nevada's Dixie Valley, and his neighbors are suing the military over the question of "advance condemnation," claiming that the military's use of the airspace above their community rendered their properties of little value.

"We thought if we could bring our case to trial it would set a precedent for all the cases that are sure to follow. But the government is really dragging its feet every step of the way," says Robbins.

The Department of Defense (DOD) has plans to expand its airspace and acquire an additional 3.2 million acres of land to upgrade training sites where troops practice bombing runs and tank maneuvers and perform electronic battlefield training. Although the DOD insists it wants to be a good neighbor, communities near their proposed expansions are nervous.

Many Nevada ranchers, longtime flag-wavers and military supporters, now suspect there may be a greater threat in military expansion than in communism and UFOs combined, and they are organizing with environmentalists to oppose such expansion.

Citizen Alert, a Nevada environ-



© 1990 Miles DeCoster

mental organization, operates a toll-free telephone number for people who have been "buzzed, boomed or bombed" by low-flying aircraft in their community. "In the past, ranchers and environmentalists have wanted to pull out the shotguns on each other," says Abby Johnson of Citizen Alert. "Now they're leaving their shotguns at the door."

The ranchers are afraid their communities will go the way of Dixie Valley. That dispute began back in 1982, when the naval base decided to expand its airspace. The Navy intended to change the base designation from a military operations area (MOA) to a supersonic operations area (SOA). Navy officials said the only thing they'd be doing differently is flying their planes faster.

But aircraft routinely broke the sound barrier over Dixie Valley, and the frequent sonic booms shattered the peace.

Horses and cattle became frantic and uncontrollable, Robbins said. One day a low-flying jet startled his mare when she was grazing. She tripped, broke her neck and died. Homes were destroyed when walls

of sheetrock were irreparably cracked and windows shattered. "We had heart attacks all over the place," Robbins recalls.

And the pranks continued. One citizen was trailed early one morning in his pickup truck by two helicopters that trained their landing lights on him as he drove 35 miles to work. When Robbins and his neighbors protested to the Navy station, the Navy denied that the helicopters in question were theirs. "Finally we sent a message of protest to Washington and received an assurance that it would never happen again. But this kind of thing went on."

Robbins and his neighbors were forced to relocate in 1987. "The Navy had a scorch-dirt policy—they burned everything to the ground, allowed the artesian wells to run wild all over the valley. They paid us 10 to 30 cents on the dollar for what the appraisal was."

Since he was forced out of Dixie, the 56-year-old Robbins has enrolled as a political science major at North Idaho College.

"I hope to become a lawyer someday," he says. "I want to nail these guys."

—Katherine Silberger

## "Nude-in" by Ford workers in Mexico unveils new tactic

MEXICO CITY—Worker's at Ford's auto plant in Cuautitlán, just outside the Mexican capital, demonstrated June 13 that they are being left naked before the law by the Mexican government, the major government-affiliated labor federation and Ford management.

Outside a hearing room of the Federal Board of Arbitration and Conciliation, workers took off their clothes to draw attention to the firing of more than 700 Ford Cuautitlán employees who are demanding the right to democratic union represen-

tation and respect by management for workers' legal and contractual rights.

Photos of the nude-in were featured in virtually all of Mexico City's major newspapers, in several cases on the front page.

In December, Ford announced that it would not pay workers the full profit-sharing and bonus payments due under Mexican law. That decision was accepted by the Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM), which is affiliated with the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party.

On January 8, workers who sought free, democratic union elections and payment of all money due were fired upon inside the plant by gunmen hired by the CTM and provided with

uniforms and directions by Ford management. Nine workers were wounded; one died several days later.

After Ford closed the plant temporarily, a back-to-work agreement was negotiated with the workers and signed March 1 by the company, the CTM and Mexican Secretary of Labor Arsenio Farell. Under the agreement, all 3,800 workers were to be reinstated within 30 days.

Ford, however, has refused to take back 700 of the workers, and the administration of Mexican President Carlos Salinas has refused to endorse the agreement that it and the company signed.

Workers at the Ford plant make an average of \$50 per week.

—Matt Witt



By William Gasperini

MANAGUA, NICARAGUA

IN A BRIEF PUBLIC CEREMONY, THE TOP COMMANDER of the Nicaragua contras finally disarmed June 27, officially ending the U.S.-backed rebel movement after nearly a decade of bloody warfare.

Israel Galeano, known as "Commander Franklin," was the last of nearly 19,000 contras who have surrendered their weapons since early May to United Nations peace-keeping troops in eight "security camps" set up around the Nicaraguan countryside.

Earlier in the week, after months of speculation that the rebels planned to surrender only lighter arms, they finally handed over 62 "Red-eye" anti-aircraft missiles, the heaviest weaponry in their arsenal. While several small groups of contras have refused to disarm and rumors abound that the rebels have plenty of weapons hidden away "in reserve," the vast majority have now demobilized.

And in a second phase of what's being called a genuine "process of national reconciliation," the government of President Violeta Chamorro has initiated a plan to reduce the size of the Sandinista military to fewer than 41,000 soldiers by August. This would total less than half of the military's size before the February election, although attrition since then has already brought the number down to about 60,000.

With Galeano's disarmament, a new phase in the long Nicaraguan drama also begins for the contras as thousands of rebels will set up several "development poles," or communities, in southern Nicaragua, starting in the rural hamlet of El Almendro.

**A good excuse:** The plan to resettle those rebels who choose not to return to their home communities stems from a peace agreement Chamorro signed with top contra leaders May 30. Using skillful bargaining tactics, Galeano asked for the plan, asserting the rebels would not be secure from "Sandinista revenge" in their original communities. Thus far, however, there have been few reports of hostility toward former rebels, while several Sandinistas have been slain in rural areas for apparently political motives.

Many of the guerrillas left for home in trucks or jeeps after demobilizing, but contra leaders say they expect 80 percent of the rebels to return once the new communities are established. Galeano himself says the plan is sure to appeal to many ex-rebels who may have trouble adjusting to civilian life after leaving the structure of the military groups they have been with for years.

But critics say the whole idea is simply Galeano's way of insuring power for himself by continuing to control a sizable number of rebels in an area he can call his own. Under the peace agreement, the former guerrillas will be allowed to form their own police force in the new communities, drawing strong Sandinista criticism that the contras will remain a threat.

"Under the excuse of providing security in the badly named 'development poles,'" said an editorial in the Sandinista daily *Barricada*, "the government has agreed to create a parallel force implying grave risks for the security of the area and even for the national police."

Although Internal Security Minister Carlos Hurtado says the new armed force will total no more than 150 men and will be entirely incorporated into the national police structure, the Sandinistas have balked at giving the contras territory in the first place, calling the plan a *de facto* move to divide the country.

# Contras move toward life after disarmament

The development plan will be financed with foreign-aid money, including some of the \$47 million allotted for rebel "repatriation and resettlement" in the recently approved \$300 million U.S. aid package. The

## NICARAGUA

money has also sparked debate over assistance to ex-Sandinista soldiers. The government so far has only pledged to seek funds to help them resettle.

**The first "pole":** A collection of small wooden houses set on the rolling plains of southern Nicaragua, El Almendro became something of a "contra capital" as the disarmament process moved forward. In the nearby U.N. camp, each guerrilla handed over his or her weapon before receiving an identity card, a month's supply of food, new clothes and a medical checkup. The town itself is now packed with rebels who will establish the new communities in two vast areas in the south and central parts of the country.

The territory comprises approximately 12,000 square miles stretching to the border with Costa Rica. This is roughly one-and-a-half times larger than El Salvador, but with a current population of only 32,000, compared with El Salvador's 5 million.

Government officials say the contra development plan will open up new areas in land-rich Nicaragua, although doubts exist as to the fertility of soils. Logging operations may also take advantage of the area's thousands of acres of trees that were uprooted during a devastating hurricane in October 1988.

At present, most of the land is used for grazing cattle, although part is thick forest from a nature preserve along the San Juan River. With this in mind, Galeano has even mentioned forming a "Battalion to Protect the Environment," which also triggered Sandinista charges that the rebel chief merely is seeking whatever pretext he can to keep some of his men armed.

While the various "development areas" will be village units within this large geographical area, rebel leaders have already made it clear they think the country's entire southern region will be under their control.

"We'll have police in each 'pole,' but the government has promised to demilitarize the entire country," said Galeano, indicating that the Sandinista army will have to withdraw and leave the new police as the only armed presence in the area. He has also talked of forming a new "*campesino* party" comprised of ex-rebels.

The development plan has provoked tension in Sandinista-founded cooperative farms located along the Costa Rican border. The region was the only one to give the Sandinistas a decisive victory in the February elections. One of the country's most backward regions prior to the 1979 revolution, it was long the focus of Sandinista development plans. The cooperatives and development villages, called *asentamientos*, built along the border also had strategic importance for winning "hearts and minds," according to Sandinista planners involved in

the region.

**No hearts and minds here:** But the extreme opposite is true in the central region near El Almendro and throughout the provinces of Boaco and Chontales, traditionally the area where anti-Sandinista sentiment has been highest among fiercely independent ranchers and cowboys. Sandinista candidates throughout the region lost by a 3-to-1 margin in February.

"The contras haven't bothered us. Instead, we've always been helping them," said Felipe Castillo Mora, a farmer in a village not far from El Almendro. "This has always been their area, so if they become police things won't be so different."

At this point the number of rebels who will actually end up living in the new communities remains unclear. But comments from many demobilized contras indicate that the pull of home may prove stronger than fears of possible "Sandinista revenge" back in their hometowns.

"I don't really want to go back there. The land isn't even good enough to grow beans or corn," said former rebel Antonio Centeno in the town of El Jicaro, 200 miles north of Managua. "We fought all these years to live in peace near our homes, not someplace far away."

Nicaragua is a nation where regional pride

and family ties are strong, and many Nicaraguans view the southern area as a backward, undeveloped part of the country. Centeno and other contra colleagues said they felt no fear for their safety back home, even though thousands of Sandinista militias remain armed on farm cooperatives around the country. (These militias are also supposed to disarm gradually, although this may prove difficult given concern that the Chamorro government may try to restore cooperative-held land to former owners.)

With the construction of the first communities under the development plan about to begin, the reduction of the army will also get underway. After lowering the overall number of troops in July, a "restructuring" of the top officer corps will take place. Sandinista Army Gen. Humberto Ortega will remain for the time being as head of the military to implement this process.

Ortega, brother of former President Daniel Ortega, left the National Directorate of the Sandinista Front to stay on as military chief. He has made several public appearances with Chamorro in what appears to be a case of strange bedfellows but what Chamorro says reflects her desire for "true reconciliation among all Nicaraguans."

The new Nicaraguan leader was even able to persuade the contras to abandon their original demand that Gen. Ortega step down prior to their demobilization, convincing them of her insistence that the army would indeed answer to her. Having engineered disarmament in a relatively short time, Chamorro is one step closer to healing the country's wounds.

William Gasperini is *In These Times'* correspondent in Nicaragua.

Gift

GIVE  
IN THESE TIMES  
OFFER

In These Times

1912 Debs Ave.

Mt. Morris, IL 61054

MY NAME

Address

City/State/Zip

Send my first gift to:

NAME

Address

City/State/Zip

☐ \$34.95 one year ☐ \$18.95 for 29 issues

☐ New order ☐ Renewal

Send my second gift to:

NAME

Address

City/State/Zip

☐ \$24.95 one year ☐ \$16.95 for 29 issues

☐ New order ☐ Renewal

Send my third gift to:

NAME

Address

City/State/Zip

☐ \$19.95 one year ☐ \$14.95 for 29 issues

☐ New order ☐ Renewal

☐ Payment enclosed.

☐ Bill me later.

☐ Charge my MC/Visa

# exp. date

Or call our toll free number 1-800-435-0715. In Illinois call 1-800-892-0753.

A gift card will be sent announcing your gift.

Please write any additional gifts on a separate sheet of paper. Each gift being sent to Canada or Mexico, please add \$6.50 postage for 29 issues and \$13.00 for one year. All other foreign orders add \$23.20 for 29 issues or \$33.00 for one year.



# Democrats go wrong on civil-rights revisions

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

**F**OR THE LAST TWO DECADES, DEMOCRATS and liberal lobbyists have battled recalcitrant administrations, conservative policy groups and business organizations over civil-rights issues. Although liberals have won some notable victories—the extension of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the repudiation of the Supreme Court's 1984 decision in the *Grove City* case—the net result has been small victories and larger defeats.

The prime examples are busing and affirmative-action suits, where the enmity engendered has often outweighed the small legal gains achieved. But even what initially seemed to be victories have turned out to be defeats. For instance, after triumphantly blocking the Supreme Court nomination of Robert Bork on civil-rights grounds, liberal Democrats were cornered into confirming a colorless replacement, Anthony Kennedy, who was just as conservative and far less intellectually distinguished.

Now liberals may be engaged in another self-defeating crusade—to pass a new Civil Rights Act of 1990. The bill, sponsored by Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and Rep. Augustus Hawkins (D-CA), is designed to overturn recent Supreme Court decisions that limited the rights of employees to sue for

job discrimination. Most of the bill's provisions unambiguously reflect the Democratic Party's commitment to equal rights, but one does not, and, predictably, it has raised a storm.

This measure would allow blacks and women to sue for discrimination even if they cannot demonstrate that an employer was

## DISCRIMINATION

using racial or sexual criteria in hiring. Under Kennedy-Hawkins, they would have to demonstrate only that seemingly neutral criteria are disproportionately excluding them from employment. In their defense, employers would have to show that their hiring criteria are essential to job performance.

The measure's opponents, led by the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and other business groups, charge that it would force employers to hire by quota in order to avoid lawsuits. The Bush administration is taking their side. "I want to sign a civil-rights bill, but I will not sign a quota bill," Bush told a May 17 press conference. On the other hand, the measure's supporters, organized in the 180-group Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, insist, in the conference's words, that the provision "does nothing to promote or encourage quotas or any other affirmative-action remedy."

The critics, however, have a good case. If the language of the bill is weighed carefully against law and precedent, it does foster quotas. And quotas—far from being benign—are illegal under the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which barred discrimination against all races and colors and against men and women; moreover, in legislated form, the measure would probably be declared unconstitutional under the 14th Amendment's guarantee of equal protection under the law.

A quota bill is also the last thing the Democrats and the civil-rights lobby currently need. The specter of quotas has already helped erode the Democrats' base in the white working class, making it more difficult for them to win elections and, more important, to pass measures that would substantively improve the lot of blacks and whites.

**Proving discrimination:** The controversial provision was written to challenge the Supreme Court's anti-quota ruling in a 1989 case, *Wards Cove Packing Co. vs. Atonio*. The provision's supporters claim, however, that not only does it not encourage quotas but that it more accurately reflects Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which bans job discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin. But Title VII's legal history tells a different story.

In Title VII's first six years, the courts rejected claims of discrimination where individuals could not show an intent to discriminate, but in March 1971, the court considered the case of black employees at the Duke Power Co., who argued that they were being denied promotion to certain jobs because of a high-school-diploma requirement that was not necessary to the performance of the jobs. A district court had found in favor of the company because the employees had failed to show that Duke Power intended to discriminate, but the Supreme Court ruled seven to zero that the employer was guilty of discrimination regardless of intention. "If an employment practice which operates to exclude Negroes cannot be shown to be related to job performance, the practice is prohibited," Chief Justice Warren Burger wrote in *Griggs vs. Duke Power Co.*

Over the next 18 years, however, significant ambiguities arose in the application of *Griggs* to Title VII cases. *Griggs* did not specify upon whom the burden of proof rested—the defendant or the plaintiff. Did the plaintiff have to show that the criteria were unnecessary, or did the defendant have to show that they were necessary? And while Burger referred to "business necessity" in describing what had to be proved, he also referred to the weaker criterion of "relation to job performance."

Perhaps the stickiest legal point was whether the defendant had to show that pattern of hiring was the result of a specific criterion or merely assert the result's connection to a "system" or "collection" of criteria. In *Griggs*, the black plaintiffs pointed to a specific requirement, but in some subsequent cases, plaintiffs merely asserted that a company's overall criteria had had a disproportionate impact on a particular race or sex. This made it possible for plaintiffs to establish a prima facie pattern of discrimination simply on the basis of statistics, without showing that the pattern of bias had been caused by specific hiring criteria.

**Two interpretations:** From these ambiguities, the courts constructed both a narrow and a broad interpretation of *Griggs*, culminating in the 1989 battle over *Wards Cove*. In the narrow interpretation, a plaintiff would have to demonstrate that a specific

employment criterion had resulted in a discriminatory pattern of hiring and, at the same time, was unrelated to job performance. In the broad interpretation, a defendant need show only that the composition of a company's labor force failed to conform to the racial or sexual proportions of the available labor pool. Such a demonstration would by itself suggest that the employer's hiring criteria, taken together, were leading to discriminatory results. The employer would then have to prove that the criteria were a "business necessity."

In 1989, the Supreme Court agreed to hear the case of a group of unskilled Filipino and Eskimo cannery workers who sued the Wards Cove Packing Co. on the grounds that they were systematically barred from the company's higher-paid non-cannery jobs. The district court had ruled against the workers on the grounds that they had not demonstrated that the company's specific hiring criteria were discriminatory. The appeals court, relying on a statistical proof of discrimination, reversed the district court's ruling, but then the Supreme Court upheld the district court.

In a five-to-four opinion, the Supreme Court ruled that the cannery workers had not demonstrated the company's hiring pat-

**A quota bill is the last thing the Democrats and the civil-rights lobby currently need. The specter of quotas has already helped erode the Democrats' base in the white working class, making it more difficult for them to win elections.**

## EASE THOSE HEADLINE BLUES ...



## READ MANHATTAN COMIC NEWS !!

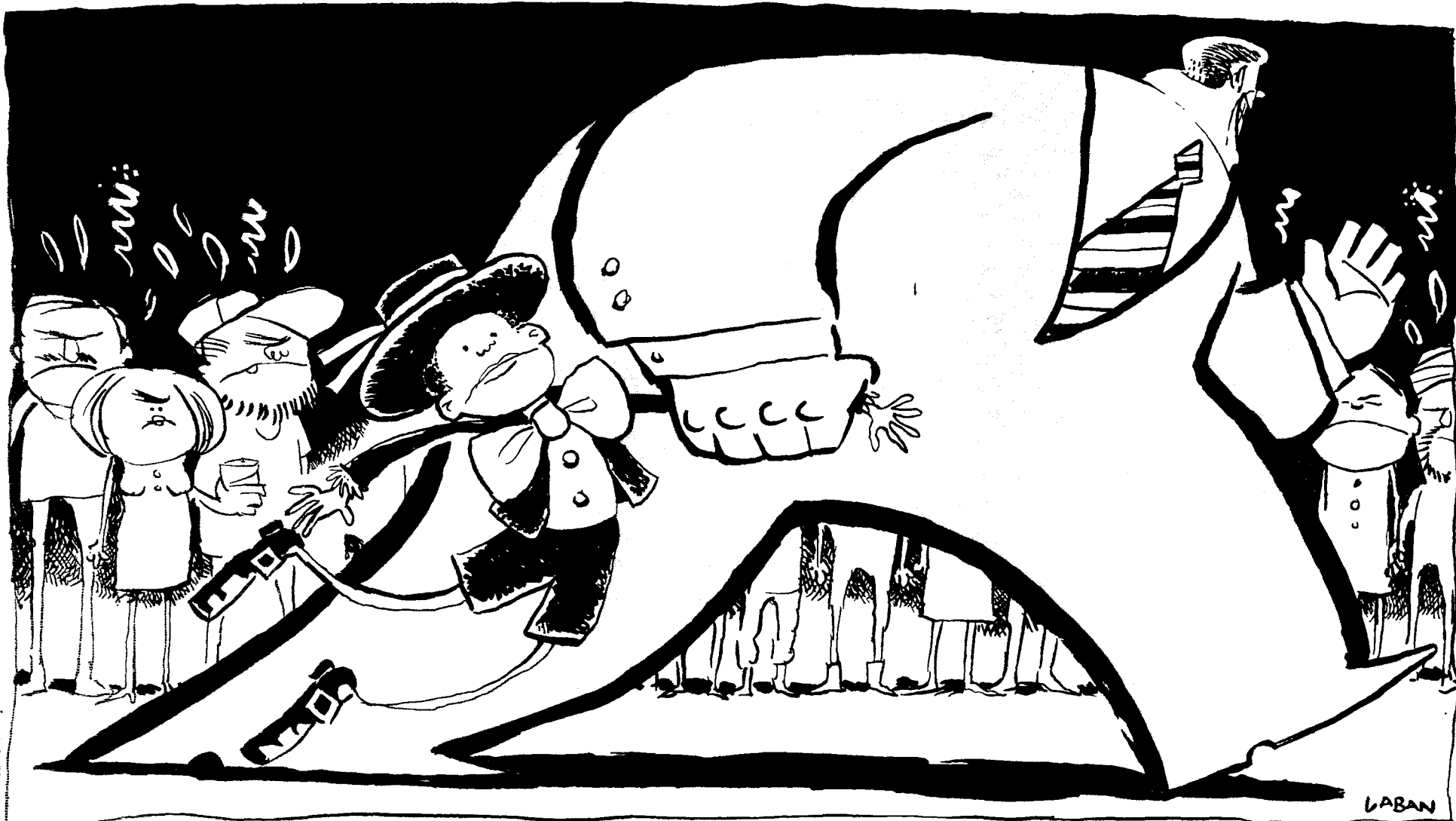
Why struggle to stay on top of current events when you can laugh your way to political awareness? Manhattan Comic News brings you the news through the astute perspective of the world's most talented political cartoonists. Send for a free sample today...

Manhattan Comic News  
250 Mercer Street, Suite 264  
New York, NY 10012

(212) 517-0250

- ☐ Please send me a free sample of MCN.
- ☐ Sign me up for 1 year - first issue free. (enclosed \$18)
- ☐ (Cartoonists, comic artists, and writers!) Please consider this sample of my material for publication in MCN.





thereof."

White argued that permitting plaintiffs to attribute hiring patterns to overall practices rather than to specific practices created a situation where the evidence of statistical disproportion was enough to bring suit. And he warned that forcing employers to demonstrate "business necessity" could make it extremely difficult for employers to defend themselves against such suits.

Civil-rights groups charged that White's decision had "overruled" *Griggs*, but the only aspect in which he appeared to go beyond the 1971 ruling was in requiring that employers show that their hiring criteria related to "legitimate goals." This criterion was even weaker than proving "relation to job performance." In all other respects, White was merely reasserting the narrow interpretation of *Griggs* against the welter of inconsistent court opinions that had followed it.

**Encouraging quotas:** By the same token, in drafting a new bill, Kennedy, Hawkins and the civil-rights lobby were endorsing the broadest interpretation of *Griggs*. According to the bill's interpretation, a "complaining party" need demonstrate only that an "employment practice" or "group of employment practices results in a disparate impact on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin." The employer must then demonstrate that this practice or group of practices bear "a substantial and demonstrable relationship to effective job performance."

In one respect, the bill goes beyond even the broadest interpretation of *Griggs*. It stipulates that a "group of employment practices" can refer not only to a "combination of employment practices" but also to "an overall employment process." And it stipulates that the "complaining party" need not show "which specific practice or practices within the group results in disparate impact." This stipulation would appear to create a situation in which the only definite item of proof needed to bring a suit would be a statistical disparity in the workforce.

In framing the provision, liberals are on

firm ground in arguing that the *Wards Cove* interpretation of "business necessity" is so weak that almost any hiring practice can be justified. But critics of the 1990 Civil Rights Act are correct to charge that the bill would encourage businesses to hire by quotas.

Of course, some civil-rights proponents argue that quotas are a necessary means to redress the legacy of black slavery and male supremacy. But besides being illegal and probably unconstitutional, quotas undermine the tradition of individual rights upon which emancipation and the civil-rights movement of the '60s was based. Americans, including black Americans, would lose more than they would gain by legitimating their use.

**Political priorities:** The provision favoring quotas is also an unmitigated political disaster. In the last decade—as the furor over busing has died—liberal and minority efforts to obtain affirmative action in hiring, contract awards and college admissions have become a key source of racial bitterness between whites and blacks. Ronald Reagan successfully ran against quotas in 1980 and 1984, and Louisiana state Rep. David Duke, currently the leading Republican candidate in the fall election for the U.S. Senate, has based his political career on opposition to affirmative action.

The provision, if passed by Congress in its present form, could be used against the Democrats in 1990 and 1992, making it even more difficult for the party to attract working-class whites. If the Democrats can't attract these voters, they will probably lose the Senate and the presidency, and liberal Democrats will be unable to pass any significant civil-rights legislation or to block invidious initiatives from business and conservatives.

There is, finally, the question of what priorities proponents of racial equality should have. For many blacks, the actual economic gains from passing the anti-*Wards Cove* provision would be minimal. The measure, if passed, would not address the wide-

spread unemployment and declining social services that blacks face in Northern cities and in the Southern countryside. As University of Chicago sociologist William Julius Wilson argues, affirmative-action programs have primarily benefitted the black middle and upper-middle classes.

Of course, one could argue that liberals should concentrate on affirmative action for the upper classes and on national health insurance, public-works spending and worker retraining for the lower classes. But politicians have to choose their priorities, and in the past decade, Democrats in Congress and the civil-rights lobby have increasingly abandoned efforts for large-scale economic programs in favor of measures like the quota provision in the Kennedy-Hawkins bill.

Priorities also don't mix politically. Press-

ing for quotas makes it even more difficult to create a majority coalition that could pass a national health-insurance or a major public-works bill. To pass these types of bills, the Democrats need to reclaim the multi-racial working-class majority that Franklin D. Roosevelt developed in the '30s. They need to restore the party's identification with the common woman and man.

In pressing for quotas rather than for public transportation, affirmative action rather than universal health care, the Democrats are taking their eye off the constituencies that they have traditionally represented. They are unwittingly becoming a party of the elite. This may get them greater campaign contributions and even some surprising victories in Congress, but it will not sustain them as a party. □

## Proposed revisions would guarantee civil rights

The Civil Rights Act of 1990, introduced during a press conference last February, challenges six Supreme Court decisions from 1989. Most of them were interpretations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which barred job discrimination. And most of them deserve to be overturned.

In *Price Waterhouse vs. Hopkins*, for instance, the court ruled that if employers could prove that they had legitimate reasons for not hiring or for firing an employee, then they were not liable under Title VII, even if they had also used discriminatory criteria in making the decision. The new civil-rights bill would make the use of discriminatory criteria illegal regardless of whether employers had additional legitimate reasons that would have led them to make the same decision. The Bush administration agrees with the Democrats on this provision.

In *Patterson vs. McLean Credit Union*, the court ruled that racial harassment of employees was not prohibited under either a post-Civil War statute or the 1964 act. The new bill would amend the statute

to make racial harassment illegal and would also amend the 1964 act to make it possible for women who are sexually harassed on the job to sue for damages rather than simply for wages or injunctive relief. The administration agrees with the Democrats that racial harassment should be illegal, but under pressure from business groups worried about litigation costs it opposed allowing women who are sexually harassed to sue for damages.

The administration's opposition to this measure reeks of a double standard and has even been criticized by former Justice Department official William Bradford Reynolds, the archfoe of affirmative action. The administration position has also inflamed Republican and well as Democratic women. If not for the fracas over the anti-*Wards Cove* quota provision, the administration could have found itself a major loser in the controversy over the new civil-rights bill. But the battle over quotas has obscured the administration's insensitivity to sexual harassment.

—J.B.J.



## Gregor Gysi

Continued from page 3  
socialist relationships.

I hope that the Communist Party in the Soviet Union has the necessary ability to reform so as to prevent the process from careening out of control, and I further hope that it succeeds in leading the *perestroika* process to success. I know that that is very difficult and that there are giant problems, but I hope, for the stability of Europe, Asia and ultimately the world, that it can succeed.

In quite another area, we have seen all these anti-Semitic activities in Eastern Europe as the Communist parties are ousted from government. Why is this happening? You are at least partly Jewish, I believe. Are you concerned about a resurgence of anti-Semitism in Germany?

No, I'm not technically Jewish, because my mother was not Jewish. But I would say that

with the ousting of the communist governments in Europe social problems have mounted, and as these problems grow, as always, anti-foreign and anti-Semitic movements grow likewise. I view this as very dangerous, and I believe it should be met with the necessary punishment while at the same time the education system is so altered that the causes are eliminated and that our youth are educated in a much more humanist and tolerant way.

It can be exaggerated, though. There is a strong anti-foreign sentiment, but here in the GDR there is no real danger of a resurgence of anti-Semitism. The truth is, we hardly have any Jews. The Jewish association has, I believe, only 300 members. That's really no count.

What about the neofascist skinheads? Ah, yes. That was naturally kind of imported from the West, no? And it is for the most part quite young people who enjoy making trouble and promoting unrest. I hope at least that that

[phenomenon] will not spread when German unification occurs.

Is there a danger of a return to fascism in Germany?

I don't see it. Of course, one must always be vigilant against the beginnings of fascism, but I don't see any danger of a fascist evolution in Germany in the sense of a union of fascists and the economy, the Nazis and the Hapsburger Front. That's what was dangerous, and I don't see that anymore. The capitalists today in Germany have no interest in fascism.

What is the danger then?

Beerhall neofascism, no? Xenophobia and the like. One must oppose this with every effort.

In a more personal vein, you defended dissidents and spoke eloquently for their rights to free expression. Why, if you believed those things, did you stay in the party?

Those were naturally years of doubts for me. I was not sure whether socialism was possible or whether it had to pass through such a to-

talitarian phase. That's one thing. Secondly, during the course of those years I had to think deeply about some basic issues. It was clear to me that the laws that were used against people like dissidents Robert Havemann and Rudolph Bahro and others were in any event wrong. I stayed in the party because I believed in the ideals. I knew many comrades who felt as I did, and I was not going to let the Politburo tell me what the party was. That is, I was not going to let the Politburo tell me what the party stood for. There were too many who agreed with my view and who struggled along with me for me to have abandoned the party.

Now there are really many idealists in the party, and I'm kind of proud that the party has become what I had dreamed and predicted that it would be. Of course, I never expected to be in the position that I presently am!

And of course, I was always aware that this was a party that had a very noble origin. That always spoke in its favor, no? Also that it had always played a positive role in peace and disarmament issues.

When did you join the party?

When I was 19, almost 20.

Why did you do it?

Ah, that had to do with my whole upbringing, with my education, with my parents. I was convinced by the political ideals [of the party] and was of the view that one could do more to achieve them inside the party.

You and I are both 41 years old. With my generation in America, we tended to be against whatever our parents stood for. How was that with you joining their party?

(Gysi laughs.) Sure, I was also oppositional to my parents. That is not the question, though. I was convinced by the underlying ideas. We had noticeable differences—clear, though—over concrete political work.

So at that time, two decades ago, as you looked at the party, what did you see that you didn't like?

They were too formalistic. And they meddled too much in youth politics and casual conversations. That was what bothered me most then. I felt good about the anti-fascist legacy, I felt good about the socialist ideals, I felt good about the sense of international solidarity, but I was troubled by the paternalism.

David Lindorff is a Spencer, N.Y.-based freelance writer.

## Books for Europe's New Dawn

FREE books if you subscribe to a remarkable series of the Best of world writing.

READERS INTERNATIONAL publishes some of Eastern Europe's boldest writers. Writers who have kept Central and East European literature alive in its darkest hours.

East Berlin's Monika Maron, for instance, whose novel *Flight of Ashes* was banned for exposing an ecological disaster and its press cover-up. From Prague, Ludvík Vaculík, "the night watchman of the Czech national soul" (L.A. Times); his witty *A Cup of Coffee with My Interrogator* embraces Gandhi to glasnost and carries a shrewd preface by Václav Havel.

RI brings you books from today's intellectual renaissance in Eastern Europe. Forthcoming titles from Eastern Europe include *My Childhood at the Gate of Unrest* by Romanian exile Paul Goma, a feast of Balkan memories; and *Homage to the Eighth District*, tales of Budapest by Hungary's prize-winning Pressburger brothers.

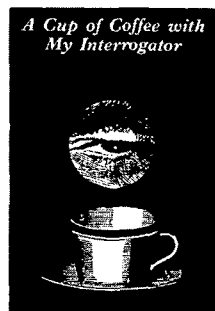
Books build bridges, not walls. Share these gifted writers' visions of a new Europe, sustained by liberty and human dignity.

(Free books in paperback; all subscription volumes in hardcover editions.)



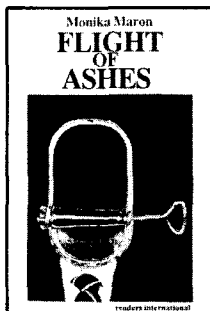
**My Merry Mornings** (005)  
by Ivan Klíma,  
Prague

'His voice is clear, intelligent and brave'  
*International Herald Tribune*



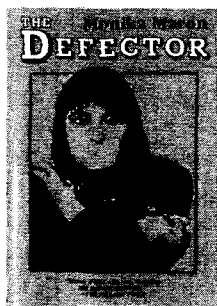
**A Cup of Coffee with My Interrogator** (035)  
by Ludvík Vaculík,  
Prague

'Cool and sparkling'  
*New York Times Book Review*



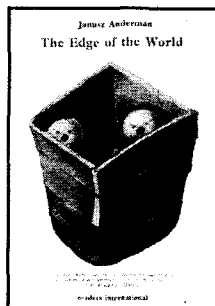
**Flight of Ashes** (023)  
by Monika Maron,  
East Berlin

'Maron writes with wit, economy and stylistic assurance'  
*Village Voice*



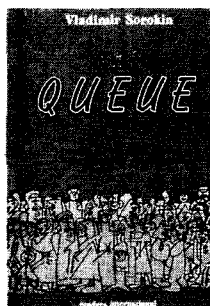
**The Defector** (041)  
by Monika Maron,  
East Berlin

'The best of her generation'  
*Le Monde*  
'Extraordinary writing'  
*Publishers Weekly*



**Edge of the World** (050)  
by Janusz Anderman,  
Warsaw

'Harsh realism, yet something magical in the result'  
*L. A. Times*



**The Queue** (045)  
by Vladimir Sorokin,  
Moscow

'Genuine zest' *The Times* (London)  
'Like Godot, but its humor is broader and nowhere so stark'  
*N. Y. Times Book Review*

### READERS INTERNATIONAL

P. O. Box 959 Columbia LA 71418

Please begin my subscription to RI at the special \$9.30 subscriber price, + \$1.65 p&p, for each hardcover edition. I'll get RI's newest title - chosen from the Best in today's literature, the world over - every other month, at the same price. I may cancel at any time.

Name

Address

City

Apt. no.

State/Prov.

ZIP/Postcode

☐ \$10.95 (Can\$13.75) enclosed. My FREE book, no.

☐ Bill my ☐ VISA or ☐ MasterCard.

Card No.

Expiry date

Signature

**SPECIAL SAVINGS and two free books:**

☐ \$55 (Can\$65) enclosed for an annual subscription. I get RI's six newest world titles, plus two FREE books:

(title numbers)

☐ Bill my credit card for \$55 (US currency only).

ITT 27

Photo: Bill Robinson/Observer

## 35mm Color Prints and Slides from the same roll

Seattle FilmWorks has adapted Kodak's professional Motion Picture film for use in your 35mm camera. Now you can use the same film—with the same fine grain and rich color saturation—Hollywood's top studios demand. Its wide exposure latitude is perfect for everyday shots. You can capture special effects, too. Shoot it in bright or low light—at up to 1200 ASA. All for a surprisingly low processing cost. And Seattle FilmWorks lets you choose prints or slides, or both, from the same roll—without the high cost of slide film. Try this remarkable film today!

### SEND ME 2 ROLLS FREE!

☐ RUSH me two 20-exposure rolls of Kodak MP film, Eastman 5247® (200 ASA) and 5294® (640 ASA). Enclosed is \$2 for shipping and handling. 100% Satisfaction Guaranteed

4655

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

Mail to: Seattle FilmWorks 500 3rd Ave. W., P.O. Box 34056 Seattle, WA 98124-1056

Kodak, 5247 and 5294 are trademarks of Eastman Kodak Co. Seattle FilmWorks is wholly separate from the manufacturer. Process at Seattle FilmWorks with limited availability from other labs. ©1987 SFW



By Diana Johnstone

IN ITS MAY SESSION IN STRASBOURG, THE European Parliament (EP) passed a resolution demanding that the European Community (EC) normalize diplomatic relations with Hanoi and provide development aid to Vietnam "without delay."

The resolution also expressed "regret" that "the U.S. government maintains its hostile attitude toward Vietnam" 15 years after the end of the war. It invited the U.S. administration "to adopt a more reasonable attitude."

The Brussels-based Commission that administers the EC also favors relations with Vietnam. The blockage is in the EC Council, made up of the heads of governments and

## EUROPE

cabinet ministers of the 12 member states. In international matters, the Council seldom strays from the path laid out in Washington.

The U.S. policy of revenge against Vietnam initiated by Henry Kissinger has been to say little, enforce an embargo and leave the dirty work to the Chinese and their Khmer Rouge protégés. Washington has been able to count on its allies for discreet support.

The debate revealed growing European impatience. Speaking for the Socialist group—the largest in the EP—former French Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson said that, with all due respect for American feelings about Vietnam, "it is not in Washington that the Community's foreign policy should be decided."

For the past decade, allied governments could say they were ostracizing Vietnam because of its occupation of Cambodia. The pretext is gone. Cheysson, among others, noted that Vietnam had withdrawn its forces from Cambodia last September. "We note improvements, and still there is no change in attitude," he said, complaining of the "total incoherence" of EC policy.

**Reality vs. ideology:** France and other EC member countries already have relations with Vietnam. But relations with the EC would bring Vietnam into the development-aid and trade-agreements circuit from which it is currently excluded, even after an EC accord with the Soviet bloc trade organization COMECON.

The Green group's Eugenio Melandri of Italy also wondered whether a "certain subjection to the U.S. government was preventing the Community from carrying out a policy more respectful of realities and less based on ideological criteria." Melandri—a Catholic priest by profession—noted that the Tiananmen Square massacre had not moved the EC to break economic relations with China, "unquestionably more appetizing from an economic viewpoint" than Vietnam. He deplored "instrumental use of human rights" according to a double standard based solely on strategic considerations. What other explanation was there for the West's "stubbornness" in keeping "a representative of the bloody regime of Pol Pot in Cambodia's seat in the United Nations"? The EC countries have the weight to get Pol Pot out of the U.N. seat if they choose, he observed.

Nobody said so in the public debate, but Margaret Thatcher's British government is generally credited with holding the U.S. line on Vietnam inside the EC Council. While Britain itself is under criticism for advocating forcible repatriation of Vietnam boat people from Hong Kong, British officials have even attempted to justify the embargo against Vietnam on the grounds of Vietnam's refusal to accept forcible return of refugees. Melandri



Left to right: Diana Johnstone with German Green Vice President of European Parliament Wilfried Telkämper, Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach, Y. Nielsen, British Labour Member of European Parliament Michael McGowan and Vietnamese Ambassador to France Pham Binh in Strasbourg, May 16, 1990.

## European Parliament and changing Vietnam policy

pointed out that Vietnam has indicated its readiness to accept those who return voluntarily.

"The refugee problem is an important problem, but it comes about through hunger," said German Green Wilfried Telkämper. "Shouldn't we rather solve this hunger problem so there are no more refugees and not quarrel over how to go on supporting the boat people?" He called for the EC to provide reparations for damage done to Vietnam in the past by European colonial policy.

Telkämper, who visited Vietnam in March along with British Labour Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Michael McGowan, noted that Vietnam has fulfilled International Monetary Fund recommendations with rare success. In the past two years, inflation has been brought from 900 percent down to 20 percent, the black market has been eliminated and rice is being exported instead of imported, while the standard of living has at least not gotten any worse.

Telkämper pointed to a new problem resulting from German unification. East Germany "had very intensive relations with Vietnam. Sixty thousand Vietnamese are working in the German Democratic Republic. Because of existing xenophobia, they are threatened with being sent back. If the whole new Germany is taken into the EC, it will be up to the EC to provide aid."

**Left majority:** There is an informal but often functioning left-of-center majority in the current legislature, the third to be directly elected in member countries. This left majority is composed of the Socialists, the Greens, the two Communist groupings (one

around the Italian Communists and the other around the French Communists) and the "Rainbow" regionalist group. On very many issues, this majority produces relatively enlightened views.

The problem is getting the EC Council to pay any attention.

The May resolution on Vietnam was in fact a complaint about the Council's failure to act on an earlier resolution passed last November 23 calling on the Council to act "now" on Vietnam's outstanding request to open diplomatic relations—the only such request left unanswered in EC history.

The left parties all actively supported the Vietnamese request. But there was also support from the Christian Democratic and neo-Gaullist groups. The only support for the U.S. embargo on ideological grounds of anti-communism came from the far-right German Republicans.

European business has no interest in the embargo, which some warn is simply delivering Vietnam to the Japanese.

Marcy Banotti of Ireland's Fine Gael welcomed "with great, great enthusiasm" the "widespread support on the part of all political groups" for relations with Vietnam.

Banotti said, "Vietnam has been isolated very cynically" by the West and "is continuing to pay the price of the tragedy of 20 years ago." Visiting Vietnam, she had found people "hungry for contact with the West, for contact with our universities and with our technical aid."

Having found the Vietnamese to be "a brilliant entrepreneurial people with an incredible capacity for hard work," she felt strongly it would take "a very, very small amount of

aid to simply kick-start the Vietnamese economy so that they themselves can become self-sufficient."

Another Irish MEP, Niall Andrews of Fiana Fail, said the Vietnamese had "showed courage and decency" by intervening in Cambodia "to stop the genocide of the Khmer Rouge ... while the international community sat aside and did nothing." Andrews complained that the West continued to recognize "the murderous Pol Pot" in the U.N. Vietnam, he said, continues to be "a victim of moral cowardice" as Europeans wrongly comply with "a need for vengeance." He complained that the EC had no independent foreign policy but behaved like a "client state," setting "a poor example of humanitarian commitment."

"We have a great deal to answer for," Andrews said. "With the intensification of the economic embargo, we continue to bend our knee in a terrible gesture of compliance."

The presidency of the EC Council rotates every six months, and this time it was Ireland's turn. The resolution was thus addressed to the Irish presidency, whose representative, Maire Geoghegan-Quinn, gave it a friendly reception. She said she found the arguments persuasive and promised they would be taken into account by the Council when it next considers the question. At the end of June, Ireland turned over the Council presidency to Italy, which also should be favorable to relations with Vietnam.

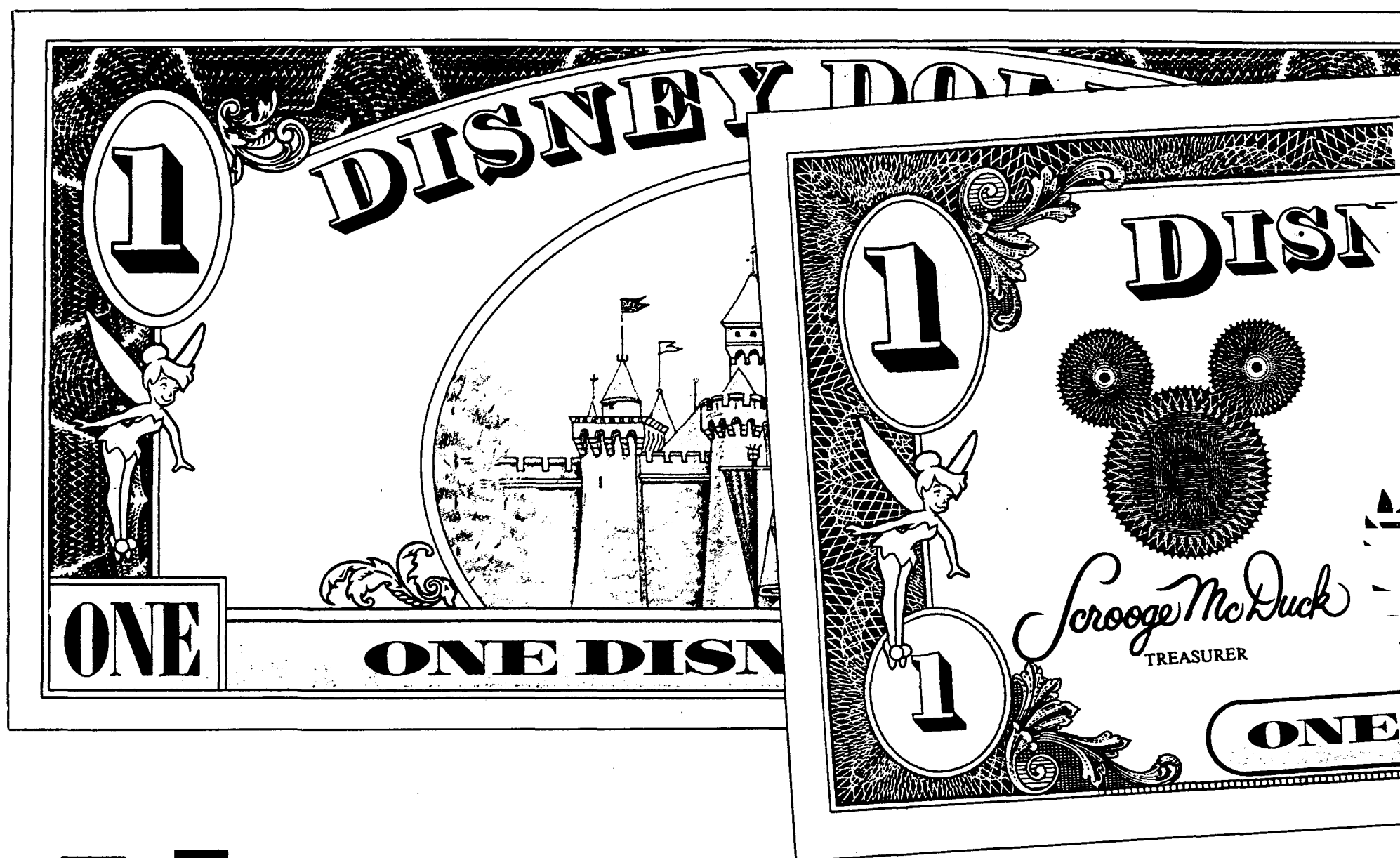
**Conscience and battleground:** The resolution on Vietnam is a small detail in the EP's overcharged schedule, illustrating its role as nagging conscience of the Community. Lacking teeth, the Parliament prods and nags. The resulting frustration is the major unifying factor in an organization fragmented by linguistic, political and cultural differences—not only between groups but within each one.

The institutional battle between the Parli-

Continued on page 22

IN THESE TIMES JULY 4-17, 1990 11





# Abusement p

**Editor's note:** Under what are perhaps the most generous operating terms granted to a U.S. corporation, Walt Disney Co. has been able to run America's biggest tourist attraction as virtually a sovereign state in central Florida. Taxpayers there give Disney essentially a free ride, while lacking any say over its growth. Recently Disney announced an enormous expansion program that will require an estimated \$1 billion in road improvements and other infrastructure costs. Guess who's going to pay for Disney's free ride.

**M**ORE THAN 25 YEARS AGO, Walt Disney's advance men came upon 28,000 acres of swampland and citrus groves in central Florida that struck them as a superb site for an amusement park. The success of the original Disneyland in Anaheim, Calif., suggested that the market existed for a much larger, far more ambitious theme park. In Anaheim, outsiders had bought up the surrounding acres and developed their own businesses, siphoning off tourist dollars. There was no room to expand. Disney's brain trust did not intend to make the same mistake twice.

When Disney's top people visited the Florida site, they realized this would be the place. Land prices were low, and state and county officials seemed eager to make a deal. In those days before centralized air conditioning was prevalent, the state had no year-round tourism industry. Nor, in fact, did it have much industry of any kind.

**Up the creek:** The prospect of thousands of new jobs made local development officials positively giddy. In 1967 officials struck a deal with Disney that convinced the com-

pany to start building. The deal centered on the creation of the Reedy Creek Improvement District. Reedy Creek, a semi-autonomous entity, became in effect Florida's 68th county. The Walt Disney County.

Reedy Creek is a Mickey Mouse government in both senses of the term. With fewer than 100 full-time residents, the population consists entirely of Disney officials and top managers. The company selects the district's officials, who handle such tasks as nominating candidates for office, qualifying voters and holding elections. Candidates run unopposed. There has never been any opposition.

Reedy Creek officials write and enforce the building codes. Most of the usual development fees are waived. Disney does not have to submit environmental-impact statements, for example. This allows the company to avoid costs that run upwards in the millions. There are no schools: children enroll in neighboring districts in Orange County. Reedy Creek does finance a fire department and sewage treatment.

Walt Disney World grew into the world's most profitable amusement park, far surpassing the Anaheim prototype. Last year it attracted more than 30 million visitors who spent \$876 million on tickets, food, beverages and souvenirs. The success of Walt Disney World has, predictably, spawned imitators. Such competing attractions as Seaworld and Busch Gardens have sprung up, hoping to attract tourists when they become Disneyed-out. This year Universal Studios opened its doors to visitors, competing with Disney's MGM-Disney Studio attraction. Tourism today is a \$6 billion industry for central Florida, the area consisting of Orange, Seminole and Osceola counties. Disney remains dominant in the mix. A dime

out of every dollar goes into its coffers.

Residents in the tri-county area have mixed feelings about the company. On the one hand, Disney has contributed hundreds of millions in tax revenues; last year alone it paid \$27 million in property taxes to Orange County. The standard of living in central Florida is high and taxes are low. Many residents attribute their material blessings to the company. Yet there is a dark side.

Affordable housing is increasingly scarce. Most of the 30,000 Disney employees have been excluded from the prosperity; as hourly wage earners, few can afford to buy homes near the theme park. And traffic congestion is growing, especially on Interstate 4 and State Road 192, the two roads leading to Walt Disney World. For Florida's sizable population of relocated Northerners, expensive housing and traffic jams are irritating reminders of the snowbelt that they had hoped to leave behind for good.

Like many residents, Orlando attorney William Wieland appreciates the emeralds of Oz but cannot ignore the man behind the curtain. "I've lived here since before Disney," he says. "Things are better economically. But the quality of life is worse. Much worse. The beaches are crowded with



**The Disney empire extends to central Florida's Mickey Mouse government.**

tourists. The roads are impassable. Even the school drop-out rate has gone up since Disney." The easy availability of Disney jobs lures kids who would otherwise hang on and graduate for economic reasons.

**Winter of discontent:** Last winter Disney's privileged status in the area came into serious debate for the first time. In what was denounced as a particularly greedy move, the company—in its guise as Reedy Creek—snatched \$57.7 million in tax-free municipal bonds to build a sewage-processing plant. The funds, made available to six central Florida counties through the state Division of Bond Finance, represented the total amount of such bonds offered that year. Two other counties had applied for the bonds but were told the applications had arrived simultaneously. Reedy Creek won a blind draw and got the money, officials said.

Local politicians began braying into the media's microphones. Orange County Commissioner Linda Chapin asserted the funds should go to helping low-income families buy their first homes. Chapin said she would try to block Disney from spending the money. A renegade politician spoke of a possible lawsuit. The anti-Disney rhetoric stoked longstanding local resentment and suggested just how deep antipathy ran.

It seemed like an unusual public-relations gaffe for the slick corporation. That summer, when word got out that Disney had finally agreed to discuss company financing of roadways that served the parks, the company appeared to be rebuilding its image. In July, the Orange County Board approved a settlement with Disney. Under the agreement, negotiated by County Attorney Harry Stewart, Disney would pay the county \$13.8 million over the next five years for roadway





By Warren Strugatch  
and Thom McMenemy

improvements.

The county, in return, would not challenge the terms of the Reedy Creek charter for seven years. Stewart boasted that "Disney has been building and building since 1972. In all that time they did not pay one dime in impact fees. Orange County is the only government to ever get them to pay anything."

Less than six months later, Disney dropped the bombshell—and suddenly \$13.8 million seemed like chickenfeed.

Walt Disney World was expanding. The proposed expansion would nearly double the size of the park. Amid typical Disney hoopla, Chairman Michael Eisner announced that Disney would pour several billion dollars into construction of seven hotels and 29 attractions. Having originally set aside nearly 14,000 acres for future development, Eisner had decided that the future had arrived.

**Seven-year itch:** News of the expansion plan—with specific details left conveniently hazy—resulted in unusually critical media accounts. The county's decision to renew the sweetheart charter for another seven years now took on enormous importance. One Department of Transportation official estimated that more than \$1 billion in road-way improvements would be needed to handle the anticipated increase in tourist traffic. In effect, the Orange County attorney had sold \$1 billion in liabilities for under \$14 million: less than a cent and a half on the dollar. Disney would expand, and Florida would pay.

Characteristically, not a word of the expansion had reached the public ahead of time. Officials representing Orange County knew. Exactly how much they knew is debatable. Attorney Stewart, coming under strong attack for "giving away the store," took as

his defense the line that anything that could be gotten from Disney was better than nothing.

State officials, from Gov. Robert Martinez on down, have stayed out of the line of fire: jawboning with Disney is seen as political suicide. Martinez has warded off attempts to involve his office by claiming the multibillion-dollar expansion is a "local issue," like a neighborhood petition for a new traffic light. A spokesman for the governor, Mack Stipanovich, says, "The governor's position is that a local government negotiated a settlement with Disney and it should remain a local situation. The governor's understanding is that the settlement precludes local government from requesting revocation of Disney's charter for seven years. The governor will stand by the agreement that was reached."

The planned expansion comes on top of last year's opening of Disney-MGM, a movie studio that does double duty as a theme park. (For Disney, the manufacture of fantasy is itself a marketable fantasy.) Last year Disney also added Typhoon Lagoon, a water-sports park. A June 1990 opening was planned for Universal Studios Florida, an attempt by MCA Inc. to compete with Disney-MGM: it features boat rides through attractions with names like "Earthquake," "E.T.: The ExtraTerrestrial," and "King Kong." A "Jaws" shark spits out bloody body parts, a pair of mouse ears included.

Central Florida is the main battleground of what the *New York Times* dubbed "The Great Park Wars": corporations devising ever more elaborate and technically impressive joyrides to seize for a moment the fickle attention of Mr. and Mrs. America and their brood. The significance of any Dis-

ney initiative is that it affects not only Disney World but the whole Florida theme-park industry—and, accordingly, the infrastructure and public services of the state. If Disney adds 29 new attractions, its competitors will surely hustle to build new attractions of their own. The result will be compounded traffic problems and environmental impact.

**Swamped in traffic:** The environmental issues are considerable. Much of Disney's 28,000 acres are swampy, undeveloped wetlands. To date Disney has developed about 6,000 acres and set aside 8,000 for conservation. The undeveloped acres are the home of threatened and endangered species, including bald eagles, indigo snakes and wood storks. Charles Lee, senior vice president of the Florida Audubon Society, told the *Orlando Sentinel* that "if Disney keeps gobbling up land for development, it's going to have an adverse impact on the environment."

Both housing and traffic are volatile issues for Florida voters. Of the two, housing is the more intractable problem. While housing prices are flat here, as in most of the country, the men and women Disney hires still cannot afford in most instances to buy a house within an hour's commute. (An additional 20,000 employees will be hired to staff the new hotels and attractions.) The result has spurred heavy demand for apartments. Local school officials say that schools are sagging under the need to serve many more students without increases in tax revenues.

Disney has proposed building 3,087 apartments on Reedy Creek land abutting Orange County, but this offers only a partial solution. The plan in fact has a devious little kicker that assures Reedy Creek will keep its country-club ambience. After the buildings

go up, Disney will cede the land to Orange County. Orange County, not Disney, would provide schools, police, fire protection and other social services. Residents would vote in Orange County.

It will be interesting to see whether Florida voters will be able to hold their representatives accountable this time. The sense that Disney has finally gone too far is growing and crossing political and economic lines. Says Joel Smith, a software developer and owner of Data Search Inc. in Orlando: "I came here from New York 10 years ago. Orlando was going to boom with or without Disney. It is a crime that the company can build anything they want and local government has no control. I think we ought to get the state government to rescind the deal with Disney and make them operate by the same rules other businesses have to follow."

**Good news, bad news:** For environmentalists, advocates of managed growth and people who think a little Mickey Mouse goes a long way, the good news is that the Disney expansion is not yet final. The bad news is that Florida politicians represent the last hope.

Disney is proceeding on the assumption that the terms provided in the Reedy Creek Charter afford it corporate sovereignty. That might not be so. Opposition to Disney's expansion focuses on a 1967 growth-management state law.

According to Tom Pelham, chief of Florida's land-planning agency, Reedy Creek is bound by the same growth-management regulations as any other district. That means it must present its plans to the state legislature and abide by its ruling. If that is so, Disney can be held responsible for providing employee housing and other services to its workers. And it would be responsible for providing road maintenance on such arteries as State Road 535 and Interstate 4.

Politicians move the fastest when it comes to avoiding responsibility, and move fast they did this time. A political consensus emerged that whatever might be done regarding Disney World could easily wait until after November's elections. Ironically, it will probably be pressure from Disney that gets the legislature to move on the issue. A report in the *Orlando Sentinel* sampled the kind of leadership Florida's representatives are offering:

State Rep. Bob Sindler, a Democrat: "It's time to visit with them [Disney] and talk. We need to see that the county's needs are funded adequately."

Rep. Brice McEwan, Republican: "Sure, we should always take a second look—but once you make a deal, you make a deal. Disney does a pretty good job out there."

Rep. Irlo Bronson, Democrat: "It's time to look at it again, but not this session. It's too late in the game for that this year." This was said in January.

Bob Speicher, Winter Park photographer and Florida native, summed up the state's Faustian bargain with Disney this way: "We wanted jobs back in the early '70s. Disney looked like a good way to get them. But Disney has ruined Orlando, ruined almost all of the surrounding areas. This was once a citrus area, but now all the groves have been sold off for building. The jobs that came in are dead-end jobs that pay cheap wages."

©1990 Warren Strugatch and Thom McMenemy  
**Warren Strugatch** is a New York-based business writer. Florida-based journalist **Thom McMenemy** covered Disney World for *Amusement Business Magazine*.

IN THESE TIMES JULY 4-17, 1990 13



# EDITORIAL

## Free South Africa

Nelson Mandela's visit to the United States was a moving personal triumph for an extraordinary man. Neither bowed nor bitter from 27 years in prison—a result of collaboration between the CIA and South African security forces—Mandela showed both the courage of his convictions and pragmatic politics. He calmly defended expressions of appreciation for longtime supporters, even if they—Arafat, Castro and Khadafy—are the current ogres of U.S. foreign policy. And although he indicated an openness to private capital within the non-racial, democratic South African society he envisions, he continued to insist that the state will have to intervene to raise black living standards and assure blacks a share of now-concentrated economic power.

Despite the symbolic importance of his personal liberation, the real point of the campaign to "Free Nelson Mandela" was always to "Free South Africa." Modestly describing himself as "a particle of a people," Mandela forcefully reminded Americans that the fundamentals of apartheid remain in place. Lifting sanctions or suspending the threat of armed resistance to continuing police attacks on blacks would remove pressure that helps keep President F. W. de Klerk at the bargaining table.

Mandela was generous in describing Congress as an ally in the fight against racism. Yet his visit may help the United States as much as South Africa if it reminds us of the remaining immense task of dismantling the legacy of our own version of "apartness," or racial segregation and discrimination. In what must be a rare moment in congressional history, Mandela instructively and respectfully linked the tradition of Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln to the tradition of John Brown, Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, W.E.B. DuBois, Marcus Garvey and Martin Luther King Jr.

There is no self-regulating mechanism in South Africa that will guarantee growth with equity, Mandela told Congress in a softened



reference to the limits of a private market economy. The same is true in this country: economic growth and equity can feed each other, lifting that long burden on the black community that more subtly wounds whites as well, but only with the visible hand of a government convincingly dedicated to that end.

## Free America

U.S. history has long been bedeviled by a strange irony: the very traditions of freedom of expression and democracy that have made it special continually generate paranoid, hateful, repressive or intolerant attacks on freedom of expression in the guise of defending America and its special character.

Congress has turned back the latest twist from what historian David Bennett called "the party of fear"—this repressive tradition—by rejecting the constitutional amendment against desecrating the flag. The Democrats have hardly been consistent or trustworthy on the issue, but those who did resist the latest know-nothings deserve applause. The Republicans are probably happier this way. In coming elections, as even Justice John Paul Stevens warned in his dissent from the Supreme Court ruling that flag-burning is constitutionally protected, they can "manipulate the symbol of national purpose into a pretext for partisan disputes about meaner ends." Rather than cower in defense, Democrats should accuse Republicans of disrespect for freedom and the Constitution.

Freedom of expression is under siege in part because many people are saying things that offend others. The list of controversies is varied: the nasty lyrics of 2 Live Crew (and other rock groups), the National Endowment for the Arts grants for art that some find obscene, racial abuse directed at black college students, "X" ratings for graphic adult films (such as the boring, sexist nonsense of the film *Tie Me Up, Tie Me Down* or the disturbing anti-capitalist allegory *The Cook, The Thief, His Wife and Her Lover*), demagogic political ads and many more. Mainly it's the right that's on the offensive. But some on the left want to prohibit discriminatory, racist or sexist speech.

The best rule on freedom of speech is the golden rule: if you try to take away the right from someone else, you'll probably find someone trying to take it away from you. This means that we should legally tolerate—in other words, not use the government to suppress—all types of expressions, even those we find repulsive, and make only the narrowest exception for the malicious falsehoods of libel and slander.

Tolerance does not imply silence, however. It is perfectly appropriate on a political or cultural level to attack the sadistic misogyny of 2 Live Crew or the racist slurs of college students. By the same token, the right is entitled to attack rock music or homo-erotic art (and others should be able to defend Robert Mapplethorpe's photos or the Dead Kennedys).

But when government funds support personal artistic expressions, the issue becomes trickier than that of simple tolerance. It is legitimate for governments to refuse public funding to certain kinds of art, but it is bad policy—bad for government and bad for art—to get embroiled in decisions over what is acceptable art. It is best to leave those judgments on which works to support to independent bodies that both understand the arts and represent diverse cultural backgrounds. It is also desirable to have varied sources of support for the arts to minimize dependency on any single one.

**The big losers:** Blacks and leftists who want to legally proscribe racist speech on campuses on the grounds that it interferes with blacks' rights to equal education are pursuing a noble end with the wrong tool. Similarly, "patriots" who want respect for the country by protecting the flag or enforcing pledges to it are using the wrong tools. In the long run, however, it is the political left and the constituencies we seek to defend that have the most to lose from any erosion of free-speech rights.

But freedom of expression is also under siege in part because of the absence of vigorous discussion on what the country should be doing to better the lives of its citizens. Instead, the right focuses the debate on dangers to the utopia of an imagined past. The "party of fear" can no longer feed as much on alien, Catholic or even Communist threats to its idea of America. The old standbys of blacks or pornography (or almost anything to do with sex) are nearly as useful as ever for stirring fears, and gays, feminists and drugs (users and dealers) provide some new threats around which to rally the pseudo-community of the flag.

These social conflicts over expression can command attention because Americans lack a more meaningful sense of national community or a national purpose that the flag, for example, could symbolize. In recent years America has been defined so much in terms of individual greed and consumption or of opposition to external enemies (real and imagined) that the sense of common goals and common endeavor has worn thin. We should expect a national schizophrenia when we have a national leader who extols families but then vetoes an extremely modest guarantee of unpaid leave from work to tend to newborn children or ill family members on the grounds that such arrangements should be bargained privately with employers.

The current battles over expression not only obscure debate over more pressing questions of national need and purpose but also reflect liberal politicians' failure to articulate a clear national agenda that gives new meaning to such broad ideals as equality, democracy and freedom.

## IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"

Editor: James Weinstein  
 Managing Editor: Sheryl Larson  
 Senior Editors: Patricia Aufderheide, John B. Judis, David Moberg, Salim Muwakkil  
 Assistant Managing Editors: Glenora Croucher, Kira Jones  
 Culture Editor: Jeff Reid  
 European Editor: Diana Johnstone  
 New York Editor: Daniel Lazare  
 In Person Editor: Joel Bleifuss  
 In Short Editor: Glenora Croucher  
 Etc. Editor: Kira Jones  
 Contributing Editor: Peter Karman  
 West Coast Correspondent: Gary Rivlin  
 Eastern Europe Correspondent: Paul Hockenros  
 Copy Editor: Mary Nick-Bisgaard  
 Editorial Promotions: Gregory L. Walker  
 Researchers: David U. Andrews, Jim McNeill  
 Interns: Kunal Kulkarni, Larry Penner

Art Director: Miles DeCoster  
 Associate Art Director: Peter Hannan  
 Assistant Art Director: Lisa Weinstein  
 Production Assistant: Terry LaBan  
 Typesetter: Jim Rinnert

Publisher: James Weinstein  
 Co-Business Managers: Louis Hirsch, Finance; Kevin O'Donnell, Data Processing/Accounting  
 Advertising Director: Bruce Embrey  
 Office Manager: Theresa Nutall

Circulation Director: Chris D'Arpa  
 Assistant Director: Greg Kilbane  
 Phone Renewal Services: Vicki Broadnax

Concert Typographers: Sheryl Hybert

*In These Times* believes that to guarantee our life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, Americans must take greater control over our nation's basic economic and foreign policy decisions. We believe in a socialism that fulfills rather than subverts the promise of American democracy, where social needs and rationality, not corporate profit and greed, are the operative principles. Our pages are open to a wide range of views, socialist and nonsocialist, liberal and conservative. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

(ISSN 0160-5992)

Published 41 times a year: weekly except the first week of January, first week of March, last week of November, last week of December; bi-weekly in June through the first week in September by Institute for Public Affairs, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647, (312) 772-0100

Member: Alternative Press Syndicate

The entire contents of *In These Times* are copyright ©1990 by Institute for Public Affairs, and may not be reproduced in any manner, either in whole or in part, without permission of the publisher. Copies of *In These Times* contract with the National Writers Union are available upon request. Complete issues of *In These Times* are available from University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, MI. Selected articles are available on 4-track cassette from Freedom Ideas International, 640 Bayside, Detroit, MI 48217. All rights reserved. *In These Times* is indexed in the Alternative Press Index. Publisher does not assume liability for unsolicited manuscripts or material. Manuscripts or material unaccompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelope will not be returned. All correspondence should be sent to: *In These Times*, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647. Subscriptions are \$34.95 a year (\$59 for institutions; \$47.95 outside the U.S. and its possessions). Advertising rates sent on request. Back issues \$3; specify volume and number. All letters received by *In These Times* become property of the newspaper. We reserve the right to print letters in condensed form. Second-class postage paid at Chicago, IL and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *In These Times*, 1912 Debs. Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054.

This issue (Vol. 14, No. 29) published July 4, 1990, for newsstand sales July 4-17, 1990.





# LETTERS

## Holocaust now

THE "VIEWPOINT" PRESENTED BY CHARLES A. Gardner (ITT, May 23) is a reasonable attempt at discrediting the comparison between the Nazi Holocaust and modern-day deaths realized through abortion. However, one definition of holocaust is "any mass slaughter or reckless destruction of life." Therefore, although the intent is not the same as in the Holocaust, if abortion is murder, then there is a holocaust going on today.

Gardner implies that the fertilized egg is not a human being because it can become any one of many different possible human beings. The flaw in this logic is obvious. While it is true that the "informational specks" do not define a specific human being without regard to the environment in which that being grows, that is true for people after birth as well as before. We are each the product of environment and heredity, from the time of conception until death—that is part of being human.

I am also concerned about Gardner's misrepresentation of the pill as destroying healthy fertilized egg cells. Such pills are available, but the combination pill, containing both estrogen and progesterone, inhibits ovulation, therefore preventing fertilization; it does not destroy healthy cells.

It may be silly to think that moral questions can be resolved scientifically, but science may be able to eliminate the moral question altogether. The time to think about birth control is before fertilization occurs, not after a human life has been started.

Art Wilson  
Olney, Md.

## No brain

DOES "IN PERSON" EDITOR JOEL BLEIFUSS HAVE ANY brains? The profile of Paul Wellstone (ITT, June 6) reported by Adam Platt included the observation that Wellstone's impassioned oratory in Minnesota might make him "just another loud-mouthed Jew" in New York.

A very careful and generous reader giving the most charitable interpretation of this remark could assume that Platt was referring to the Minnesota view of Jews. But the reference to an anti-Semitic stereotype is ambiguous enough for a sensitive editor to delete. Why didn't you?

Sharon Lieberman  
Evanston, Ill.

**Adam Platt replies:** As a loud-mouthed Jew myself, I didn't consider the term to be particularly perjorative. Your "most charitable interpretation" was the one I hoped for. Also, I'm not so sure we make any headway in eliminating bigoted stereotypes by pretending they don't exist (a popular Minnesota pastime). As for my insensitive editor...

**Joel Bleifuss replies:** As a Presbyterian who has been accused of being taciturn and cold, I don't view having a loud mouth as something negative. People in different cultures communicate in different ways. Unfortunately, the left in the U.S. has a tendency to avoid recognizing the influence of cultural traditions. Although this is well intentioned

and historically understandable, buying into the idea of melting-pot homogeneity as the politically correct line impoverishes analysis and leads to an insipid view of our world. Those interested in this tendency of liberalism to simplify and organize the elements of life in a rational way should read *The Liberal Imagination* by the soft-spoken New York Jew Lionel Trilling. I wait for the "proper, circumspect Lutheran farmers" referred to in Platt's article to raise their voices in protest. But knowing my Minnesota uncles, I doubt I'll hear anything.

## Think again

I WAS AMAZED TO READ DONNA COTNER'S RECENT letter (Letters, May 23). She states that Israeli measures against the intifada are "racist oppression" and compares it to the Holocaust! She adds that "at least the victims of the Holocaust are not now actively tormented." Of course they're not actively tormented—they were murdered in the concentration camps.

Although I think that Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza is stupid as well as unjust, their reaction to the intifada is probably milder than the reaction of most other nations would be to acts of rebellion, and undoubtedly milder than would be the reactions of Arab nations of the Middle East—just look at how King Hussein suppressed his Palestinian uprising in September 1970.

Was King Hussein engaged in "racist oppression" then?

Cotner would do herself a favor if she would hold off on mindless name-calling and read a little history.

David Steinberg  
Mason, N.H.

## And justice for some

THE SIX-MONTH PRISON SENTENCE GIVEN TO JOHN Poindexter for his role in the Iran-contra affair is another dramatic sign of the two-tiered justice system in this country. This I know from direct experience. In January 1989 I received a one-year prison sentence on five misdemeanor counts of trespassing. My crime was praying for peace atop Minuteman nuclear missile silos. Unlike the requests of North and Poindexter, my demands for a jury trial were ignored.

Two other defendants in the same case suffered even greater injustice. Jerry Zawada, 52, a Franciscan priest, and Dorothy Eber, 63, a grandmother from Villa Park, Ill., were each sentenced to two years in prison for the same misdemeanor crime of trespassing. Both are still incarcerated. Like Poindexter, we also appealed our case. Unlike Poindexter, we were not permitted to remain free on bond

until our appeals were exhausted.

Like Poindexter, we believed we were acting in defense of the people of this nation, namely the millions who are exposed to the hazards of nuclear weapons production and shipment. By sitting on those warheads, we were demanding that money being spent on bombs be used to house, feed, educate and provide health care for the 40 million Americans living in poverty.

As U.S. District Judge Harold Greene said, Poindexter and the men he worked with believed they could "frustrate laws that fail to accord with notions of what is best for this country and to carry out their own private policies." These "private policies" resulted in the deaths of thousands of innocent Nicaraguan civilians.

Oliver North received community service for his crimes—all felonies. John Poindexter—someday—may serve six months for his felony convictions. The lesson is clear. If you are wealthy, white and powerful, you can expect leniency from our criminal-justice system. But God help you if you are poor, a person of color or an opponent of the U.S. government.

I pray that someday our nation will learn that prisons ultimately solve no problems. Until then, peacemaking will continue to be treated as a much more serious "crime" than warmaking.

Duane Bean  
Chicago

## Self help

BEFORE RETIRING, I WAS EMPLOYED IN THIRTY World countries by a U.S. political patronage contractor on USAID projects and became quite familiar with U.S. foreign-aid policies. Now that some new political policies are being established in Nicaragua, we can expect President Bush to promote a foreign-aid program compatible with U.S. political goals in President Violeta Chamorro's new government. The major goal of U.S. foreign aid is to buy political influence and concessions in the recipient country. In general, foreign-aid programs provide little direct help to the poor and destitute, but trickle-down effects could be helpful to some. Too often the real benefactors are U.S. political patronage entrepreneurs who are assigned projects and opportunities to exploit the low-cost native workers in the recipient country.

U.S. foreign aid frequently brings local concessions for U.S. entrepreneurs, inviting dissent and rebellion among the local people. It will be interesting to watch Bush's aid program create another El Salvador or Philippines.

Edward Wiederhold  
La Porte, Ind.

## No ifs, ands or butts

PHIL BEREANO'S OBJECTION ("LETTERS," JUNE 20) to the language of "covering one's butt" in your recent story on the Black Panthers (ITT, May 9) is misguided. By noting that the phrase in question has its origin in anal rape, he identifies a strong reason for its legitimacy: people want to avoid being raped.

By suggesting that concern for the avoidance of anal rape is anti-gay, Bereano underwrites at least two unfortunate anti-gay stereotypes—that gay men are always willing to "take it up the ass" and that they see nothing wrong with committing anal rape on other people. He implicitly describes gay men as ideal victims and rapists!

Why is it anti-gay to want to "cover one's ass"? The harsh realities of anal rape in, for example, American prisons make the phrase all too relevant, important and appropriate for our day. It is not anti-gay to fear rape.

Harlan W. Seymour  
Durham, N.C.

## No right

IN DONNA COTNER'S LETTER ABOUT THE PALESTINIAN intifada (ITT, May 23), she asks "how it is possible that a people like the Jews, so sensitized by their historical suffering, can perpetrate similar crimes against other human beings."

"The Jews" as "a people" are not perpetrating anything. Each is an individual with his or her own opinions and concerns. Some support the Israeli government's actions; others oppose them. Some don't know what to think; others don't think about it at all.

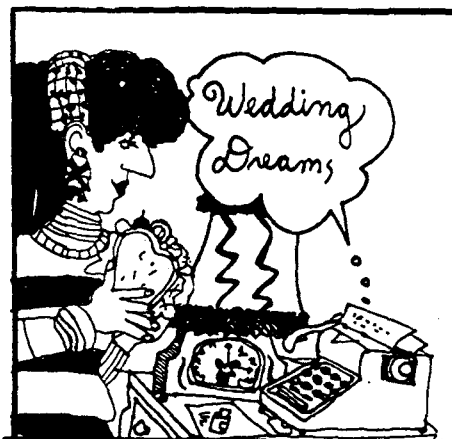
We are each guided by our own conscience. We do not represent the Israeli government, and the Israeli government does not represent us. Our Judaism is practiced in our homes and in our synagogues, not in the Israeli Knesset.

By so easily tarring "the Jews" as a "people" with the brush of Israeli actions, you are guilty of the same rush to judgment that contributes to the conflict in the Occupied Territories. Just as some Israelis base their actions on the view that all Palestinians are potential terrorists, you call up the ghost of the Holocaust in an attempt to shame all Jews for the intifada.

Many Jews have rejected the idea that all Germans bear collective guilt for the Holocaust. I reject your implication that all Jews share collective guilt for the actions of the Israeli government. Until you are able to recognize that each Jew is an individual, you have no right to criticize those who can't see Palestinians that way.

Evan Rudowski  
North Babylon, N.Y.

## SYLVIA



## by Nicole Hollander



I WAS HALFWAY DOWN THE AISLE WHEN I NOTICED THAT MY FLOWER GIRL WAS SCATTERING PIECES OF POLYSTYRENE PACKAGING INSTEAD OF ROSE PETALS, AND EVERYONE IN THE WEDDING PARTY WAS EATING BURGERS. THE MINISTER BECKONED ME, AND AS I CAME CLOSER I SAW HIS HUGE SHOES AND BIG RED MOUTH... IT WAS RONALD MCDONALD. I THINK THIS DREAM IS ABOUT CORPORATE POLLUTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT. MY THERAPIST SAYS IT'S JUST WEDDING NERVES.



By Bill Bolte

**D**ISABLED PEOPLE ARE DEEPLY TROUBLED by recent developments involving the "right to die" issue. It's starting to smell like the events in Germany under the Third Reich, where disabled people were the first to fall victim to a nation in crisis.

The U.S., facing an enormous economic crisis of its own, may be preparing the legal and psychological groundwork for the elimination of the different and the weak. It will be billed as a further broadening of freedom to encompass the freedom to choose life or death—just as we choose Coke or Pepsi. No longer need we concern ourselves with changing the conditions that cause people to want to die.

The most likely place to start is with the disabled, who are seen as an economic burden and are made to feel guilt for imposing upon others. Able-bodied people already know in their hearts that if they were seriously disabled they would want to die. Isn't it only natural that "cripples" should be the first volunteers in a movement that is already broadening to people who merely fear future disability?

In the recent *Cruzan* case, the U.S. Supreme Court ignored the desire of a comatose woman's relatives to terminate her life, apparently concerned that patients would be victimized by greedy relatives, or even by relatives who are understandably sick of the financial and emotional burden. What is more worthy of concern, however, is a society as a whole that becomes convinced that its self-interest lies in saving money on the elderly and severely disabled by terminating them or by answering their calls for psychological help, quality care and social justice with poison pills.

One irony of this drive to push or cajole the disabled off the mortal coil is the argument that their low "quality of life" makes "life not worth living," thus picturing death as yet another program to help the handicapped. In Oregon, a numerical quality-of-life rating system has actually been developed to determine the effort that will be

## Increasing 'right to die' suicides show disturbing social trend

made to continue a given individual's existence, with age and disability heavily weighted variables. Would an elderly Einstein or the very severely physically disabled astrophysicist Stephen Hawking get brownie points for achievement? Should I tape my articles to my body if I travel to the Northwest in hopes that my publishing will keep me from perishing in case of accident or illness?

On June 8, Dr. Jack Kevorkian testified in Detroit that he had used his "killing machine" to help 54-year-old Janet Adkins commit suicide. She had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, although she was still able to compose a beautiful suicide note and best a son at tennis.

On the same day, a Nevada court granted Kenneth Bergstedt, a 31-year-old man with quadriplegia, the right to be assisted in committing suicide. Bergstedt says he fears that his aging father will die and leave him uncared for.

Shortly before this, again in Detroit, another quadriplegic, David Rivlin, was assisted in suicide—made legal two weeks earlier by a Michigan court. Rivlin said the reason he wanted to die was that the state was forcing him to be institutionalized rather than allowing him to stay in his own apartment with attendants—even though this living arrangement was much cheaper.

In Atlanta, Larry McAfee, another quadriplegic young man similarly forced into institutions and bounced from state to state, was supported in his request for assisted suicide by the Georgia Supreme Court. Happily, after talking with disabled activists, he decided instead to appear before Georgia legislators to challenge the heartless and wasteful system of care that had driven him to want to die.

These increasingly frequent requests to die began in the '80s in Los Angeles. Elizabeth Bouvia, a person with cerebral

palsy, asked to be starved to death with the help of tranquilizers in a public hospital. Before entering the hospital for this purpose, she had a miscarriage, her husband left her, she lost her van and she had been counseled that she would be unemployable in the profession for which she was taking an advanced degree.

**Body politics:** In our society today we worship the perfect bodies and sleek minds of *thirtysomething*, not the grubby world of fat *Roseanne* and her beer-bellied husband—even though the reality of our lives is more like the latter than the former. Adkins, the super-mom professional, likely feared the far grubbier world of the disabled. In a country that demands pauperization of the family before providing even low-quality nursing-home warehousing to the disabled, her anxieties were not without basis.

The issue of assisted suicide has little to do with the individual's freedom to choose. People have always had the unfettered option of ending their lives. No law can stop it, and most severely physically handicapped people can find a way if they really want to. The issue is whether assisted suicide will be made available to certain groups more than others, that the fall of the disabled into oblivion will be greased by readily available equipment, hand-hold-ing and denial of options.

As a former mental-hospital administrator, I know that a 24-hour watch would be put on a patient who expressed suicidal intentions. Why is the society outside institutions doing the direct opposite for people with physical disabilities? Why is what would be interpreted as a "cry for help" from an able-bodied person assumed to be a genuine desire for extermination when it comes from a disabled person?

Repeatedly today the severely or permanently disabled are described by the media

as "suffering" or "ailing" or "hopeless" when they aren't. In Bouvia's case, her American Civil Liberties Union lawyer described her as terminally ill, even though cerebral palsy is in no way terminal and she is presently living alone in Los Angeles. With reasonable medical care and some physical help, even the most severely disabled can lead productive lives. What can be terminal is the depression that follows a new disability and the hopelessness that grows with isolation, prejudice and grim living conditions.

**More Reagan carnage:** A partial cause of the trend to suicide may be disillusionment with government policy. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Sec. 503 and 504, was also declared by disabled leaders as our civil-rights act. It supposedly gave the disabled equal employment and other rights in all programs receiving federal funds, a very large part of our economy during an era that saw a massive boom in defense contracts.

But now, 17 years later, nearly all agree that the hopes of 1973 were smashed in the '80s. The law was effectively neutered by the Reagan-Bush administration with cuts in social-service budgets, lack of enforcement and conservative judicial appointments. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, unemployment is sharply up among disabled people, while the buying power of the working few is down. One program after another that would foster independence has been cut.

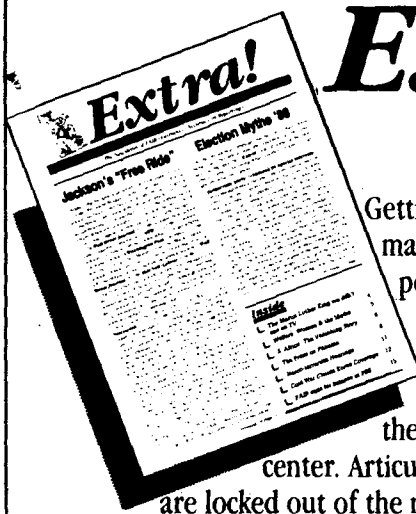
In California, as elsewhere, there have been draconian cuts in the State Department of Rehabilitation, the agency looked to for training and education of the severely disabled. Outgoing Republican Gov. George Deukmejian is now attempting a final gift to his anti-tax supporters—an \$816 million cut in programs for the disabled. Dianne Feinstein, the Democratic candidate, insists that all programs, including those for the disabled, will be "put on the table" for possible reductions. Only Attorney General John Van de Kamp, the Democratic candidate defeated in the primaries, stood firmly against further cuts. No one advocated increases.

The people who are considering and carrying out suicide are those who need these education, housing and health programs the most. They are the poor among the disabled, the very bottom of society, and, clearly, they do not count politically.

The poet Allen Ginsberg summed up the situation recently on National Public Radio this way: "Now that the Cold War is over," he said, "they've declared war on the underclass." And they are winning the battle.

The disabled have been among the first casualties, even though some of them still don't know where the bullets came from. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as the 1973 act before it, may actually hurt disabled people by convincing the public that the problems are solved. Pretty words are OK, but without the ladder of education, housing, health care and good transportation, all the pretty words don't mean a thing.

**Bill Bolte** is a Los Angeles-based writer and wheelchair-using disabled-rights activist who has been arrested more than 20 times and jailed more than 10. In 1988 he led 40 sledgehammer-wielding wheelchair-users against an inaccessible Hollywood Walk of Fame, which is now wheelchair-accessible.



## Extra! Extra!

READ ALL ABOUT IT!

Getting the story from the mass media is next to impossible. TV news and the press offer us a spectrum of political views ranging from the far right to the far center. Articulate progressive voices are locked out of the national debate.

But you can challenge media bias . . . by subscribing to the award-winning publication *Extra!*, published by FAIR (Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting), the national progressive media watch group.

*Extra!* analyzes what the media aren't telling us and what they're distorting about Central America, nuclear arms, electoral politics, the environment and dozens of other issues. *Extra!* exposes the ties of media owners to America's big military contractors.

Complaining about the media simply isn't enough anymore. *Extra!* is the tool you need to challenge bias and censorship.

### Subscribe to Extra!

*Extra!* is published 8 times a year.

☐ \$30 I want to join FAIR (and get my free subscription)

Yearly subscription rates are:

☐ \$24 — Individual

☐ \$36 — Foreign

☐ \$45 — Institutional

☐ \$16 — Student, Senior,

Unemployed

☐ I'm making a \$ \_\_\_\_\_

contribution to support

FAIR's work

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to FAIR and mail to:

FAIR, 130 West 25th Street, New York, NY 10001

Tel: 212-633-6700

ITT



## Standing in the path of "development"

WATSONVILLE, CALIF.—Drive into this farm town in the Pajaro Valley, 90 miles south of San Francisco, and the sign says that some 27,000 souls dwell within the city's limits, which is a piece of solid misinformation, as such signs usually are. Double the number and you'll be nearer the truth. For years Watsonville, like other towns across the state and across the nation, has been facing and ignoring a crisis in low-cost housing.

The town itself has been prospering, by the conventional measures of such achievements. The north end of town has been sprouting new malls with broken pediments in the proper post-modernist fashion. In downtown Watsonville the old 200 block on Main Street went down on orders of the city manager, and the bare earth, where pleasant little restaurants like the Jalisco once flourished, now awaits the retail bric-a-brac of yet another mall. But all the while the workers, pickers and packers who help earn Watsonville its agricultural wealth—at least 50 percent of the fresh vegetables consumed in America are grown in this area—cram with their families into garages or made-over chicken coops or sleep in their cars.

It took the earthquake last October to signal just how bad Watsonville's housing situation really was. Of all the towns in California, it was the worst hit, just a few miles south of the epicenter of the 7.1 quake. The earth shook, the houses jumped off their posts, and when the red-tagging was done, it turned out time after time that two, three or four families were piled into the old Maybeck redwood houses. For most of them, the trailer homes extorted from a reluctant Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) were a step up in life.

For the real-estate industry, the quake was the greatest of blessings. A civil engineer at his side, the city manager strode through town condemning with his red tags the buildings that stood in the way of "progress"—meaning development. To beat him you had to get your own civil engineer and fight through the ensuing hearings. Struggles like this stoked the atmosphere for the city elections that took place a month after the earthquake. They were the first after the Supreme Court had ordered that Watsonville have district elections to ensure adequate representation for the city's large Chicano community. When the dust settled, Watsonville had a new government of a liberal-leftish tinge and, for the first time, without a solid majority in favor of the developers. The city manager began to prepare for retirement.

As they assessed the situation, the new city council concluded that Watsonville needs 2,585 more units for low-income households. Under the laggard tempo of Business As Usual, there's no way this demand can be slaked. For a start, if land costs \$100,000 to \$600,000 an acre, how can any realistic economic arithmetic end Watsonville up with \$80,000 homes or with \$400 a month rentals?

Now it so happens that Watsonville does have over 300 acres of land at its disposal for low- and moderate-income housing, and on June 13 the Veterans Hall on East Beach Street echoed with jagged exchanges as citizens debated the merits of using the land

## ASHES & DIAMONDS

By Alexander Cockburn

for this purpose.

It was local activist Frank Bardacke who, in the January issue of Watsonville's bilingual monthly *El Andar*, first pointed out that the airport—covering 331 acres on the north edge of town and owned by the city—would be doing humanity a far better turn as a site for cheap housing, parks and schools than what is now, as he rather snidely but accurately put it, an "aviation theme park for adults." Bardacke's suggestion was an unwelcome arrival at the table of respectable opinion.

The developers' plans are very different. They don't give a hoot for housing for poor people and would be happy enough if the airport swelled to three times its present size. That would represent progress. Also representing progress for them would be the conversion of Watsonville's source of wealth, its prime agricultural land, into condo units for rich folk commuting up 101 to Silicon Valley.

But in the months since it was first raised in January, Bardacke's idea has been pushed to and fro, and in mid-June it got a public airing at the Veterans Hall, where, commencing sharp at 7:30 p.m., the class geography of Watsonville was forthrightly on display: city and Santa Cruz County officials ranged across the top of the hall, flanked by staffers and experts; trim aviators and their business allies in the center sector; and off in the right rear bleachers, what used to be called the working poor, mostly browner and smaller and waving signs such as "Houses, not hangars," "Se puede vivir en un avion?" and "Why are we subsidizing rich men's toys?"

To hear the pro-airport faction tell the story, you'd conclude that Watsonville has played the same vital municipal function as LAX and the Port of Los Angeles rolled into one: a bustling commercial entrepot, apt for civic emergency, hosing treasure into the city's coffers. Besides, said the aviators, there were federal restrictions mandating that it remain an airport forever.

Then the housing advocates began to put in their side of the case and immediately scored a small but important victory. Mindful of due order and bureaucratic symmetry, the council members and supervisors had placed the public microphone dead center in the hall at the front of the middle aisle. Witnesses would of necessity face the dignitaries and have their backs to the audience, unless they screwed around with an occasional glance for support and encouragement.

When Bardacke's turn came, he seized the microphone and took it off to one side, where he could address the audience and the officials simultaneously. "Put it back at once," shouted Madam Chairperson of the county supervisors. "Leave it where it is," cried Bardacke's supporters. Then a businessman heaved himself out of his chair and carried the seditiously located mike back to the center. A housing advocate dragged it back. Great clamor in the hall. Finally the new mayor of Watsonville told Bardacke he could speak where he wanted. Of such small things is the political texture of an event formed. The whole idiom of the evening, previously narcotic with bureaucratism, abruptly changed.

The claims of the aviators began to wilt. As a hub of commerce, Watsonville keeps

a very low profile. The only regular user is United Parcel Service, with a daily flight that may soon be terminated. For emergencies, there is Monterey Airport, half an hour down the road, plus private airstrips and heli-pads nearby. The airport's one moment of virtuous glory after the earthquake, when supplies were rushed in, balances poorly against the daily social emergency of the

**As a hub of commerce, Watsonville keeps a very low profile. The only regular airport user is United Parcel Service, with a daily flight that may soon be terminated.**

housing crisis. Just 67 airport users have Watsonville addresses; there are less than a hundred planes in the hangars, maybe double that number on the tie-downs outside; the place runs at a loss; the feds have no claim on it. As for the business executives who say that life would lack all meaning unless they can jet into Watsonville, it would be cheaper for the city to offer them a limo service from Monterey or San Jose.

Both nature and power abhor a vacuum, and so power—pilot power, developer power, the state airport lobby—is trying to fill the dangerous vacuum of this economically useless and socially marginal airport land with bureaucratic sludge: a brand-new independent "airport land-use commission," replete with members of the airport lobby, which will answer to state guidelines about "appropriate airport development" (meaning, in fact, that they would be able to veto unwelcome development in most of Watsonville, with decisions to be overturned only by a two-thirds city council or county supervisor majority. ... You get the idea. Push elected officials as much as possible out of the picture. Ah, democracy! So much to be cherished in Eastern Europe, so much to be feared at home, where, as

Manuel Osorio described that night in the Veterans Hall, families live in spaces smaller than the fuselages of the small planes out on the airstrip.)

The atmosphere got edgy. Guillermina Ramirez, one of the leaders of the packing-house strike, began to talk in accented English. "Speak in English," yelled Louise Blanchard from the audience. So Ramirez said that if they didn't like her English, she'd speak in Spanish, which she duly did most eloquently, with translation that followed from City Councillor Oscar Rios. "I'm not rich or educated," she concluded. "We need housing, so why don't you use your airplanes to live in and see how you like it?"

The battle will roll on. Even a couple of years ago, the housing advocates wouldn't have stood a chance and Watsonville would have been shaped by respectable power, as yet it may, into the familiar *fin de siècle* contours of dormitory for the rich, slum for the poor. But Watsonville has a very feisty activist population that has won some big triumphs in recent years; as Frank Bardacke wrote in *El Andar*: "We fought the Migra [the Immigration and Naturalization Service] to a standstill. We waged one of the strongest strikes in recent American history. We came back from the destruction of the earthquake and managed to get hundreds of trailers from FEMA. We won the struggle for district elections and then elected a left/liberal city council to replace the conservative regime that had run the city since the '50s. Are we strong enough now to shut down the airport and use the land for the benefit of the whole community?"

## Footnote

In my article on Panama published a few weeks ago, there was some information regarding three Panamanian labor leaders (Mauro Murillo, Gustavo Martinez and Juvenal Jimenez) which included some remarks from Murillo to the effect that he and other trade union leaders had been informed by the U.S. State Department that they were on a list of people who "would be eliminated" if they "didn't get on their feet in support of the opposition [to Noriega]." This information and details about repressive new labor laws came from a story by Daphne Wysham in the April/May issue of *Labor Action* published in Oakland. Unfortunately, the attribution of this excellent report got omitted. ■

Distributed by Alexander Cockburn.

## SUBSCRIBER SERVICES

### MOVING?

Send changes with old mailing label to:

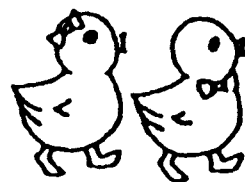
In These Times  
1912 Debs Ave.  
Mt. Morris, IL 61054

### PROBLEMS?

If you have any problems or questions regarding your subscription, please write or call:

1-800-435-0715 (National)  
1-800-892-0753 (Illinois)

MARIA SCALZITTI



KIDFEATHERS INC.

QUALITY RESALE FOR MOMS AND KIDS  
(WE SELL ON CONSIGNMENT)

3525 N. SOUTHPORT, CHICAGO, IL 60657 • (312) 525-3887

10% OFF WITH THIS AD.

MATERNITY WEAR  
CHILDREN'S CLOTHING  
NURSERY FURNITURE  
TOYS, BOOKS, CAR SEATS  
ETC.



By Salim Muwakkil

**W**HEN U.S. DISTRICT COURT Judge Jose Gonzalez declared on June 6 that an album by the rap group 2 Live Crew was obscene, it was the first time a recording had been so judged. Although Gonzalez' ruling for a three-county Florida district was unprecedented, his reasoning resonates in U.S. history.

African-American idioms—and rap music is profoundly idiomatic—have traditionally been regarded warily by mainstream culture and occasional attempts have been made to throttle some black cultural expressions; too much sexual candor is the typical rationale for those censorious efforts.

Gonzalez' ruling that the 2 Live Crew album *As Nasty as They Wanna Be* is "an appeal to dirty thoughts and the loins, not to the intellect and the mind," falls squarely within that tradition. It's a mystifying tradition, however, considering how many of those same black expressions eventually are incorporated into—or expropriated by—mainstream culture.

Many civil libertarians connect Gonzalez' ruling to the current furor over funding for the National Endowment for the Arts and the recent attempt to criminalize the burning of the U.S. flag. All of these controversies were provoked by renewed attempts to limit freedom of expression. As a piece, they illustrate the growing cultural clout of politically empowered conservatives. A preoccupation with cultural issues also serves as a convenient distraction from some of the substantive issues this administration would rather avoid. After the Gonzalez decision, a record-store owner in Fort Lauderdale—a city noted as a cocaine import center—was arrested and handcuffed on a misdemeanor charge for selling the album.

**Cultural offensive:** A growing number of analysts argue that the Florida ruling represents something considerably more ominous than a temporary spasm of xenophobia or the mere politics of distraction. Some, in fact, contend that the Florida judge's decision fires another salvo in an ongoing war against African-American males. "It's no mistake that a group of young black males should be singled out for this offense, when there are many other groups doing similar things," said Houston Baker Jr., director of the Philadelphia-based Center for the Study of Black Literature and Culture and author of several books on African-American literature.

African-American males "die earlier, are less educated, are more unemployed and incarcerated than any other segment of the U.S. population," Baker added. In view of what appears to be an all-out offensive on black males in other spheres, Gon-



## Censorship and sensibility

zalez' ruling falls right in line, he said. What's more, Baker said, the accused offenders are practitioners of a "musical genre that is perhaps the most creative, innovative, entertaining, profitable and, yes, positive that young black men have ever invented."

Rap music has few parallels in the way it speaks to the concerns of the audience. If ever there was a musical expression with its finger on the pulse of the community, it is rap. Immediate and raw, the style embodies the volatile moods of urban black America. Although Baker is generous in his praise for rap's aesthetic vitality, he is not an uncritical booster of the genre. Like many others who share his view of the Gonzalez ruling, Baker is critical of 2 Live Crew's particular brand of rap.

"Their lyrics are offensive in many ways," Baker added. "The misogyny and profanity in their lyrics are of a high order and are particularly pernicious, and I'm surely not down with their program. And to be truthful, their rap is third-rate stuff anyway." But, he said, rap not only captures the spirit of the times, it also reflects and chronicles the realities of our nation's deteriorating inner cities. "These are places where black youth are faced with untenable decisions like whether they should work at McDonald's for \$9,000 a year or deal crack for \$9,000 a month."

**Ribald tradition:** Baker noted that much of African-Americans' vernacular style is rooted in the ribald tradition of sexual exaggeration and parody and that groups like 2 Live Crew must be interpreted within that

context. "A lot of what's going on now results from a lack of communication due to the increasing isolation of African-American culture from mainstream America," he said.

### RAP

Baker echoed the views of Henry Gates Jr., professor of English at Duke University and one of the most celebrated critics of African-American literature, who wrote a *New York Times* op-ed piece June 19 defending the group. "In the face of racist stereotypes about black sexuality, you

**For many middle-class black Americans, rap is a soundtrack for sociopaths.**

can do one of two things: you can disavow them or explode them with exaggeration. 2 Live Crew, like many 'hip-hop' groups, is engaged in sexual carnivalesque. Parody reigns supreme." The group, Gates wrote, is engaged in "turning the stereotypes of black and white American culture on their heads."

But for many middle-class black Americans, rap is less the fresh sound of urban America than a soundtrack for sociopaths. Distance, both cultural and geographical, from the street-wise sensibilities that inform rap is precisely what distinguishes them as middle class, so

their feelings are hardly surprising. But mainstream black leaders largely were silent during the 2 Live Crew controversy until the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) released a statement upbraiding the rap group for claiming its raunchy lyrics represent the black cultural experience.

"Our cultural experience does not include debasing our women, the glorification of violence, the promotion of deviant sexual behavior or the tearing into shreds of our cherished mores and standards of behavior," said NAACP Executive Director Benjamin Hooks in the statement. Although Hooks affirmed the group's First Amendment rights, he was clear in his disdain for the lyrical content of *As Nasty as They Wanna Be*.

"There is no doubt that 2 Live Crew is a legitimate part of the black tradition," explained Cornel West, a professor of philosophy at Princeton University and chairman of the school's African-American Studies Department. "Denying their validity is also in the tradition of the puritanical black middle class, which would prefer that such vulgar groups wouldn't embarrass them by showing the race in its worst light."

**Proper paranoia:** The black middle class' reaction is understandable, West added. "They're angry at 2 Live Crew for providing the racist white mainstream with an easy target to attack. And the group deserves some of that anger. We have to support them for libertarian reasons, but our artists and entertainers must be held accountable if they showcase mis-

ogynist, homophobic, patriarchal and sexist attitudes."

And while West said he discerns a racist motive in the attack on rap, he insisted it is less ominous when properly contextualized. "White Americans as well as other Americans feel very concerned by the escalating social decay and civic terrorism they see around them, but they also feel powerless to do anything about it. There's a reason for the cultural paranoia we are feeling. Americans are full of rage, and they want to take it out on any available scapegoat. Young black men, because they are projected as America's leading criminals, are perfect for the scapegoat role."

In addition to the public furor provoked by the 2 Live Crew ruling, the controversy intensified an ongoing debate among African-American theorists about the function of art and the role of artists in the black community. Black cultural nationalists contend that black art should be dedicated to cultural liberation and in projecting heroic images. And, though they have different ideas about content, nationalists have made common cause with those middle-class cultural monitors who serve as de facto image police.

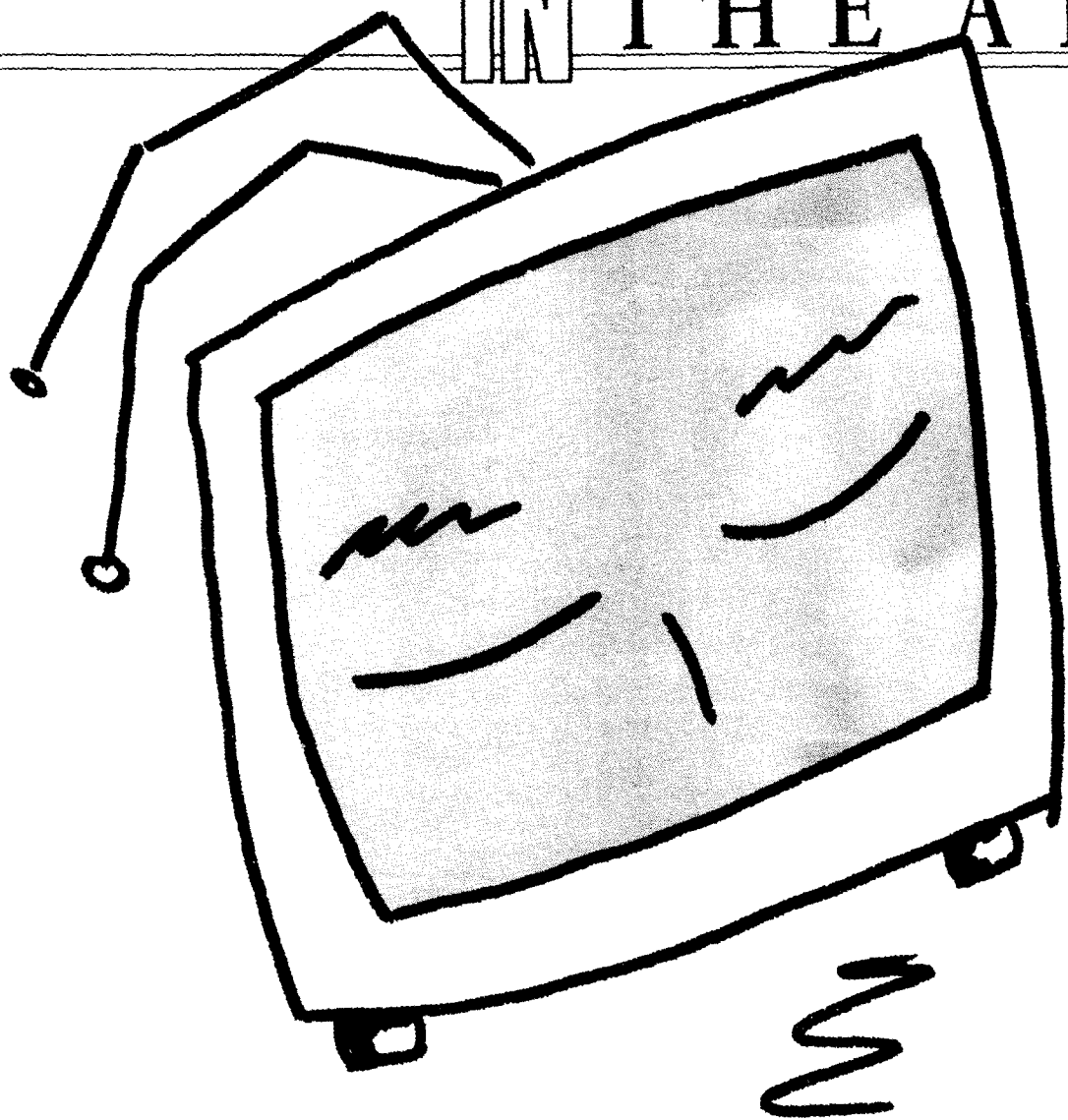
The African-American left generally is more libertarian and less prescriptive about aesthetic concerns, though some Marxist variants are just as rigorous in analyzing content as is the most Afro-centric nationalist. Even those NAACP middle classers who are embarrassed by the excesses of rap value First Amendment protections.

"This debate about the filth, trash and scurrilous trivia put out by that infantile rap group could be educational for a lot of black people," said *Village Voice* critic and author Stanley Crouch. "Because of that, the freedom of speech enshrined in the First Amendment is essential. I'm against censorship. But beyond that, I'm disturbed by the argument that the ruling against 2 Live Crew was a racial proposition because of some special black cultural propensity toward vulgarity. That argument is a gross insult to black lower-class people and an example of true racism."

Crouch, one of rap's earliest and most severe critics, dismissed both Gates and Baker as "lightweights" who don't understand cultural mores. "To say an expression has cultural validity just because we do it is facile. If the mere fact that we do something means it's worthy of display as a cultural artifact, then why don't we have glass bathrooms?" However, even Crouch agreed that the Florida judge's action amounts to a cultural assault on certain black expressions. But, he said, such assaults may serve a useful purpose if they help illuminate deeper issues. ■



# IN THE ARTS



© 1990 Miles DeCoster

## Public TV tunes out the big picture

By Pat Aufderheide

*Non-commercial television should be our lyceum, our Chautauqua, our Minsky's and our Camelot. It should restate and clarify the social dilemma and the political pickle.*

—E.B. White

*Public TV is a series of meetings occasionally interrupted by a program.*

—PBS saying, 1989

**T**HE DEATH OF THE ELEVENTH Hour, the feisty, uneven and Emmy Award-winning public-affairs show on New York public TV station WNET, was as contentious as its short life. The mid-June cancellation has brought a flood of angry phone calls and membership cancellations. Hardly what the financially strapped station needs.

The show's life and death highlight the crisis of public TV—which, ironically, was the subject of one of its last programs (on which I appeared as an essayist). That crisis is twofold: money and mission.

The Carnegie Commission, which proposed today's public TV in 1967, wanted a service that could "help us see America whole, in all its diversity." It imagined, out of commercial TV's vast wasteland, a service that could deliver tough, investigative public affairs, on-the-spot coverage of social crises, windows into America's many cultures and their perspectives, great teachers interpreting their vision and, above all, freedom.

"We seek freedom from the con-

straints ... of commercial television," the authors wrote. "Freedom from the pressures of inadequate funds. We seek for the artist, the technicians, the journalist, the scholar and the public servant freedom to create, freedom to innovate, freedom to be heard in this most far-reaching medium. We seek for the citizen freedom to view, to see programs that the present system, by its incompleteness, denies him."

**Half a dream:** Only some of the commission's proposals made it into law, and the biggest one—guaranteed adequate funding—was left by the wayside. Even so, public TV carved out a special role for itself: kids' shows such as *Sesame Street*; documentaries such as those of *Frontline*; TV's only hour-long news show, *MacNeill/Lehrer*; occasional specials such as Bill Moyers' remarkable series critiquing commercial media, *The Public Mind*; and an impressive instructional service that is picked up by half the schools with televisions.

But 22 years after the freedom dream was proposed, public TV is looking at slipping audiences, sagging legislative enthusiasm and the indifference of corporate funders. Some wonder if it can survive the '90s.

The looming danger for public TV is irrelevance. If public TV can't regularly offer American viewers something no commercial service does, if it can't stake and make its reputation on its civic rather than entertainment function, if it can't play a vital role in the local community, it may not survive. There's too much

commercial competition for the kind of programming—nature, arts, how-to shows and old movies—that's been a staple of public TV. And if

### TELEVISION

that happens, the nation's only programmed alternative to ad-sponsored TV information will evaporate.

*The Eleventh Hour* was a small, sobering example of the problem. On a system that rarely features local public affairs—it usually costs too much and raises the hard questions that make a station's board members nervous—it was challenging nightly news.

Even at WNET, one of the biggest and most powerful of public TV stations, it was one of only two local shows. Although WNET holds a

### Money problems and a wavering sense of mission may leave public TV without a public.

license to run a community-responsive broadcast operation, it spends the bulk of its money on producing and packaging national programming, selling it to the rest of the U.S.' public TV stations. *Great Performances*, *Nature*, *Adam Smith's Money World*, *MacNeill/Lehrer News Hour*—each a separate entity—funnel their productions through WNET.

*The Eleventh Hour* reached beyond gentility and familiar faces. It sought out underrepresented voices and angles on the news each night. After the Bronx Social Club fire, Hispanics appeared on the show to explain why social clubs were too important to shut down. After the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill, programs asked what would happen if a spill occurred in the New York Harbor. Controversial performance artist Karen Finley—a target of Jesse Helms' wrath—was showcased. As the East European bloc collapsed, the show hosted left spokespeople to ask, "Is socialism dead?" In its last week, *The Eleventh Hour* produced a four-hour schedule on gays, including Marlon Riggs' controversial film, *Tongues Untied*.

"It wasn't an easy place to work, and everyone was underpaid," said one producer, "but I think the reason we all came here was because we were a real alternative to the nightly news, and we were doing what public TV was supposed to do."

But *The Eleventh Hour* also made some people nervous, including one executive who was overheard muttering in an elevator that the show was "too left." Others worried about its low ratings and uneven quality.

The segment on the crisis of public TV—a courageous move of self-criticism on the part of the producers, especially compared with commercial TV's spinelessness—raised hackles in upper management. But it wasn't the only show to do so. For instance, journalists who'd received a preview tape on Jewish-Palestin-

ian dialogue on Middle East peace were surprised to find a completely different segment aired. The earlier segment had been structured around a production by the leftist San Francisco Mime Troupe—which, along with some panelists, disappeared in the second version.

"Only public TV would have put this stuff on the air in the first place," said a producer. "But it's also typical that they didn't stick to their convictions."

**Slicing the pie:** The official reason for canceling the show, as well as *Metro Week in Review*, was money. WNET projects a 10 percent budget cut for next year. "We have to live within our means," said Vice President George Miles. "And that means making hard choices."

But a hard choice is still a choice. True, the show was expensive—WNET claims *The Eleventh Hour* cost \$5 million to \$6 million, although former host Robert Lipsyte can find maximum costs of only \$2 million (the station next year will launch a lower-budget nightly talk show). And like most public-affairs shows, it didn't attract corporate donors. That left WNET to pick up most of the costs out of the \$47 million of its budget that isn't already earmarked for national production.

But there are many ways to split up \$47 million, which goes to—among other things—overhead, fundraising and buying programs such as *Wild America* and *The Nightly Business Report*. It's even possible to trim production without canceling it. Instead, however, WNET axed its entire local public-affairs agenda—traditionally the most vulnerable part of public TV's programming and also a unique non-commercial service.

"What this means," said Lipsyte, "is that WNET goes back to this endless loop of weasels eating snakes and old movies you can rent at your local video store. Someday somebody's going to wake up and say, 'Why does WNET exist in the first place?'"

"And then there will be no place for fresh, innovative points of view and quirky aspects of our lives and all those voices public TV was created to hear."

That question is broader than one public-affairs show at one station. Public TV's identity problem is also a survival issue.

Last month in Dallas, public TV's hard choices were front and center at the Public Broadcasting Services annual conference. "The issue here is public TV's image and role in the '90s and how it'll justify its public funding," said Jack Willis, producer of some of public TV's fiercest public-affairs programs and now head of Minneapolis station KTCA.

"Public TV has to be more than a Sunday-school version of the networks," said Lawrence Daressa, a board member of the newly created

*Continued on following page*

IN THESE TIMES JULY 4-17, 1990 19



Continued from preceding page

Independent Television Service, intended to foster innovative independent programs. "Americans all think Sunday school's important, but nobody wants to go."

The Dallas conference was the first and perhaps the only time representatives from all aspects of station operation (1,300 of them) met. This was the showdown, where shifts of power to decide programming—the proof of public TV's pudding—were at stake.

**Running the numbers:** Numbers hint at public TV's need to change. Public TV is largely dependent on member, government and corporate dollars, and each pool is either stagnant or shrinking.

Its prime-time ratings are not just low—2.2 percent of viewing households—but they are slipping from where they'd been holding steady since 1981. It is part of a general broadcast hemorrhage of viewers to cable and videocassette.

Public TV's new rivals include The Discovery Channel, with endearing animals; the Arts and Entertainment Network, sucking up public TV's upscale culture audience; and a host of movie channels. And recent surveys show that viewers think the Discovery channel rivals the still-top-rated public TV. Should public TV compete, cooperate or abandon the field and try something truly non-commercial?

"Part of the problem with public TV's mission now is that the enemy has fragmented," said Lewis Freedman, head of the William Benton Broadcast Project and a public-TV veteran. "It was easy to say what we'd do back in the '60s, when the 'other side' was three big networks."

That fragmenting may be the first sign of much larger change. Broadcast could even become irrelevant in a wired nation also dotted with cheap satellite dishes. But the current problem of audience drain is keeping public TV too busy to worry much about the big picture.

That's because public TV is losing more than viewers. It's losing members—the one-in-10 viewers who donate the money that adds up to almost a quarter of its \$1.2 billion-a-year operating budget. New-member



Czar gazing: PBS program czar Jennifer Lawson looks to the future.

Public Broadcasting Corp.

growth has declined, and membership levels are depressingly static or slipping. That's why the documentary series *P.O.V.*, hyping itself to station buyers, touts, "[Baby] Boomers. You want them. We have them." (Adults ages 18 to 49 are prime targets for fundraisers.)

**Deadly indifference:** Just as serious in the money crisis is government funding, responsible for almost 40 percent of public TV's budget. Federal funds have shrunk since 1980 in actual dollars—due to assaults by the Reaganites. Worse, according to a recent survey by public TV's lobbying arm, although most congressional staffers vaguely like public TV, they can't come up with specific reasons why.

In a time of deficit and austerity for social programs, Congress doesn't have to hate public TV to kill it. It just has to not care enough. As lobbyist John Lawson said, "The '90s will be a watershed. Something's

got to give, and we just hope it's not public broadcasting." And if public funds disappear, the last non-commercial buffers are gone. Purely viewer-supported stations would likely cater religiously to upscale audiences.

Finally, corporate dollars are dwindling for public TV, just as they are generally. (Another one of those Reagan myths was that private enterprise would pick up the ball government dropped.) Public TV currently counts on corporations for more than 16 percent of its operating budget.

**Mission impossible?** The money problem translates directly into a mission problem. Pinched budgets have provoked staff cutbacks in recent weeks at stations in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Boston, Cincinnati and Seattle as well as at WNET. Cutbacks tend, of course, to fall on the stuff that's least lucrative—like public affairs at WNET.

But there are other measures of the money-mission problem. For instance, *Lassie* and *Lawrence Welk* turn up on some public TV stations vying for escapist eyeballs.

And other programs pop up on commercial and non-commercial stations. *The Infinite Voyage*, a science series sponsored by Digital Equipment Corporation, aired on commercial broadcast TV the same week it debuted on public TV; the only difference was that Digital ran commercials instead of giving itself an underwriting plug. In many cases, the distinction between a commercial and an underwriting plug is nominal; the ever-more-relaxed rules make it possible, in some cases, to run an ad on public TV and call it underwriting.

The family drama series *WonderWorks*, produced through WQED in Pittsburgh, is co-produced with the Disney Channel. So those co-productions run several times on the Disney Channel before they air on public TV. True, public TV paid for only \$5 million of a \$14 million *WonderWorks* budget. But if it's going to air used products, buying ready-made would be cheaper.

In a pinched economic atmosphere, corporate dollars can set the program agenda. For instance, Northwest Airlines (which flies to Asia) is sponsoring a four-part series produced at KCTS in Seattle, "Doing Business in Asia." The host "focuses on entrepreneurial opportunities as well as how a tried-and-true Ameri-

business and social elite as to all other social strata. Programs about unions were rarities.

PBS' own 1989 record of social issues addressed by its programs—a comprehensive list made up for stations so they can fill out Federal Communications Commission forms—only underscores this charge. On those lists "Labor" isn't even a category. But it's hardly surprising that labor issues aren't well covered when stations depend so heavily on corporate donors and on subscribers who've come to expect easy comfort instead of engaging controversy.

Views from the left are far less common than stridently conservative opinion. No show balances the right-leaning voices of William Buckley, Morton Kondracke and John McLaughlin. Left-of-center programmers often find suspicion and resistance. *The Kwitny Report* had a short, embattled life. The Center for Defense Information's *American Defense Monitor*, while foundation-funded and showcasing an array of policy opinion, is unacceptable to PBS because of its advocacy origins (although some public stations carry it).

Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting, a New York-based media advocacy group urging broader coverage of left issues, has charged that the *MacNeill/Lehrer Newshour's* selection of interviewees focuses on a narrow range of powerholders and policy issues, and thus is biased toward the status quo and toward "two-sides-of" questions that are flip sides of the same counterfeit coin. Long familiar with attacks from conservatives, public TV officials have been taken aback by FAIR's charges. At the Dallas conference, Jim Lehrer sounded both wounded and outraged.

"Our calm, two-sides-to-every-question, play-it-as-it-lays, non-showoff journalism is not for the ideologues of this world," he said. "But I have some bad news for them. We've been doing it now for 15 years, and our current plans—you, God and the underwriters willing—are to continue to do it for at least another 15."

"And the underwriters..." That is, of course, the key. AT&T might not be so eager to back a news show that ranged far beyond existing consensus. Its explicit policy, after all, is not to fund good works but to locate its name in a congenial atmosphere for prospective clients.

**Why bother?** Each of these mission-money headaches is also a reaction to public TV's longstanding financial crisis. Relaxed underwriting guidelines do bring in the corporate dollars; schlock at pledge week brings in members.

But many now fear that such solutions are only making problems worse. Corporations can target their upscale audiences on cable, members can rent old movies on videocassette, co-productions further muddy public TV's image. And increasingly, PBSers worry that somebody in government will ask the ugly, \$480 million question: If public TV

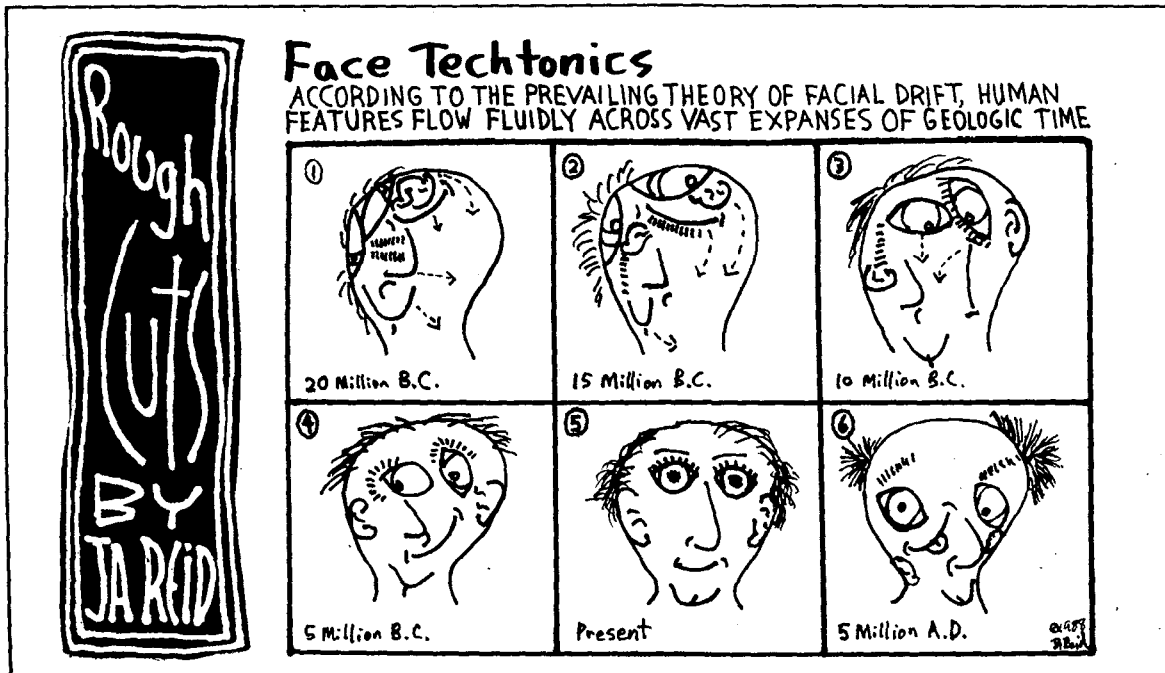
## Congressional indifference could kill public television.

can business formula will need to be adapted for success in Asia."

*Adam Smith's Money World* coyly boasts to prospective station buyers that the show is "a great candidate for local underwriting. Our audience profile reveals that we attract the best of the PBS profile, with upscale, well-educated, even-gendered viewers and a good ratio of 35-49-year-old males."

**Workers—endangered species:** The problem with corporate underwriting isn't necessarily the quality or bias of the show but what it says about public TV's priorities. Out of everything we might need to know about Japan, is adapting U.S. business formulas the public's top priority? And should a station buyer's purchase decision be based on what they can get the local bank to back?

The priority problem also surfaces in what's not on the air. For instance, the American worker on PBS is an "endangered species," according to a survey released at Dallas by Made in USA Productions, which specializes in labor issues and has warred with public TV before. Prime-time PBS programming, it charged, devoted nearly twice as much programming hours to the





is an outlet for tired commercial product, a minor partner in co-production, a poor rival to cable companies offering the same kind of programs, a service that can't afford or is frightened of local public-affairs programming and a forum for corporate image-buffing, then does the public need to spend half a billion dollars a year supporting it?

Rep. Al Swift (D-WA), a broadcaster himself and a longtime public-TV booster, soberly addressed its problems in a conversation with *In These Times* after speaking to the PBSers.

"The fears are real," he said. "Public TV does have a nagging image of elitism, and Congress is in a tight situation financially across the board."

"But if the federal government continues to withdraw support, what are their alternatives? They've been pushed, as a result of the Reagan administration's hostility, into alternatives, each of which was counter-productive. They do have to break out of the downward spiral, and they seem here to be aware they've been drawn in directions they don't want to go."

"I'd like to see them adequately funded—then I'd be more comfortable being critical if I had to be," Swift said.

**Nixon's revenge:** Today's dilemmas are rooted deep in public TV's history, as Ralph Rogers (chairman of the board of Texas Instruments and longtime board member of public-TV organizations) pointed out to conventioners (see accompanying story). Public TV was born in poverty, and it immediately walked into controversy. Nixon tried to smother public affairs by decentralizing public TV and forcing matching funding. That virtually guaranteed that public TV wouldn't be in much of a position to take risks.

Today, public TV is not a network but a loose association of 341 struggling stations. They each get some money funneled through an umbrella organization, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), and all but a handful choose their core programming through their membership organization, the Public Broadcasting Service.

For many years, stations have pooled funds to buy programming, in a several-round voting process. The winning shows are those that offend the fewest stations and appeal to the fundraising needs of the greatest number. What doesn't stand a chance is a single investigative documentary, or an experimental art video, or a media criticism show, not to mention a left-of-center talk show. Controversy, of course, is never good for business. Programming that showcases America's diversity rarely is.

"Impulse and intuition are so fractured by the democratic process that you might not get the creativity you need," said Bill Moyers, who regularly has had to sell his programs to reluctant station programmers.

**A czar is born:** Three years ago, PBS members—worried about as-

ing a market niche for lack of an identity—began to discuss how to change program selection. At the Dallas meeting, the finishing touches were being put on the plan, which has at its center Jennifer Lawson—PBS' new "program czar." Rather than individually voting on programs each year, stations would receive a package deal put together by Lawson, who worked for years at CPB and before that at a funding agency for independent film.

The changeover has been intensely controversial, mostly over Lawson's accountability to the stations. Small stations that share a market with other public TV stations worry about the cost of prepackaged programs they won't use, and large producer stations such as WNET worry about their cut of the new pie. And some worry about losing a local look with nationally set core programming. But at Dallas, stations mostly seemed ready to switch.

The restructuring could cure the tired-program-blues problem. It's a lot easier for a single person to axe an ailing show than it is to get consensus from 300 station executives. It would also be easier to launch risky new ventures—if PBS wanted to.

That's a big if—especially without greater financial or political security for the system than it has today. While calculatedly minimizing details to maximize political support, Lawson, an African-American, has made a strong pledge to "multicultural programming." Demographic changes make that approach good business, as she reminded wary station executives at Dallas.

No one knows, though, how the popular catch phrase "multicultural" translates into programming. Some, such as producer Dai-Sil Kim-Gibson, who is working on a documentary about cultural diversity, fear that "multiculturalism" might mean food and folklore. It could become the human equivalent of safely pleasant nature shows.

Many critics' hopes for a revitalized and distinctive image for public TV are pinned to the Independent Television Service (ITVS). The ITVS is a \$6 million fund for innovative programming by and about underserved audiences. Congress, pushed by an independent producer-led campaign, created it last year out of disillusionment with public TV's stodginess.

John Schott, well-respected producer and director of the offbeat experimental series "Alive from Off Center" (a grant-fed series offered free to stations), is now its new director. At Dallas, he begged producers of color to send in resumes so ITVS could create a culturally diverse staff. But even at its best, the ITVS will probably produce around six hours of programming a year, and it has no guarantee that any public TV station will want them—especially if they are controversial or formally challenging.

**The sharper image:** There's a "the imitation aerial you can stick

on your car's rear end that makes it look like you have a carphone. Public TV's short-term strategies to solve its money-mission problems sound like an informational version of that gizmo.

A high-tech, high-gear image campaign targetting upscale viewers and decisionmakers is already in motion. PBS has prepared slick promotional materials to boost public awareness of public TV, including a relentlessly upbeat self-promotion to sandwich between its own programs. "Our quality comes through; we'll show you how, just watch us now!" commercial jingle-singers croon to an accompanying montage of images—traditional cues for public TV like animals, natural vistas, exotica and its own most familiar faces.

PBS has also scheduled a 32-page insert in the *New Yorker* magazine—another source of upscale members—to coincide with the Christmas pledge season. And a major

public-relations firm has been hired to impress organizations ranging from Congress to the PTA that public TV has something special to offer.

**Yes, no, maybe:** But every proposal for truly non-commercial or controversial programming—that is, programs that make a civic contribution rather than merely please consumers who think they're too classy for *Married...with Children*, programs that don't stand a chance of corporate contributions or eager co-production by commercial entities—runs into the money-mission headache.

Consider the federal-funds cut-back specter, and one of PBS' proposed solutions: "show Congress we do unequaled electoral coverage." A study presented at Dallas suggested that public TV offer major candidates blocks of time from two to 15 minutes long, and that PBS create weekly, then nightly, election coverage. But stations are balking at com-

mitting the airtime, much less the funds. (The Markle Foundation has already pledged a third of the costs.)

Meanwhile, what's not in debate is the need to chase the market. Public-TV development staff are brainstorming a proposed PBS entry into cable with the Discovery Channel. Home video sales have been farmed out to Michael Nesmith's Pacific Arts Company, which will cherry-pick the most lucrative for its upscale mix. Station staff salaries are devoted, perhaps for years, to cultivating the million-dollar giver. An entire packed morning session at Dallas was devoted to the care and grooming of the big donor.

Public TV is preparing for the '90s with more unified programming, a sharper public image and a more aggressive political approach. What's still up in the air, though, is what its mission will be and how public TV will justify its moniker. ■

©1990 Pat Aufderheide

## Sapping public TV's political power: Nixon's the one

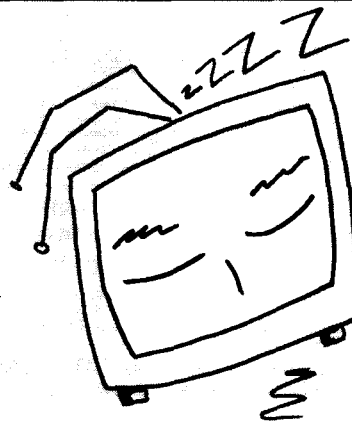
It was Ronald Reagan's Office of Management and Budget that found, in 1981, that there was no justification for spending public funds on public broadcasting.

But it was Richard Nixon who first tried to kill the service. The reason was simple: he hated public-affairs programs he saw as "anti-administration." He would have killed public broadcasting if he could. He had to settle for disemboweling its public-affairs capacity.

Programs like *Banks and the Poor*—about bank redlining—drew particular ire from Nixon staff members Clay Whitehead, Charles Colson and Fred Malek. But it was Vietnam coverage and the critical journalism of Robert MacNeil and Sander Vanocur that made Nixon demand that his staff figure out how to cut off the budget of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Sorrowfully, the staff reported that both political meddling with programming and axing the entire operation were legally off-limits. But, Whitehead and Colson pointed out, decentralization of funding would put public affairs in the hands of "local stations, which are generally more conservative in outlook." As a 1972 memo put it, "the president's basic objective [is] to get the left-wing commentators who are cutting us up off public television at once, indeed yesterday, if possible."

A veto of CPB's funding showed public broadcasting that Nixon meant business, although a bill eventually passed. A shuffling of appointments to the CPB board did wonders to clarify the board's understanding of Nixon's perspective. And a later funding bill, on the eve of Nixon's departure, showed the success of Nixon's pressure. Eventually, much of the



funding was simply passed through to the stations. Federal funding was tied to matching private funds. Key public-affairs production institutions, including the Ford Foundation-backed National Public Affairs Center for Television, lost their support. The era of critical national public-affairs programming was over. The era of balkanized public TV had begun.

At the 1990 Dallas convention, Texas Instruments Board Chairman Ralph Rogers, long a leader in public TV, reminded station executives how public TV stations, fiercely divided among themselves, had fought back once Nixon touched their lifeblood—their federal financing.

He recalled the stunning news that Nixon had vetoed the 1972 funding bill. "Nixon's position was clear," he said, "Public TV could sing anything from *Sesame Street* to *Aida* and it could dance all it wanted, but there was to be no federal money in support of public-affairs news or analysis that might be critical of the Nixon administration."

He also recalled the Nixon-packed CPB board's attempt to take over the old PBS, which was then a simple service to connect the various stations.

The solution he helped to craft was to create a new PBS whose board would consist of laypeo-

ple. Reluctant station executives accepted in the face of a worse threat. Intensive station-by-station lobbying of individual legislators resulted in a veto-proof financing bill.

"Power, in this country, comes from the people—but only when they get involved!" concluded Rogers.

Unfortunately, the canny calculations of Nixon's men also proved true. And then, once centralized public-affairs programming was gone, Nixon's men endorsed the notion of political insulation through advance funding for CPB.

The Reaganauts tampered with the advance funding in 1981, arguing for rescinding allocated funds on the grounds that public TV was so elitist that it was irrelevant to the majority of the public.

Ironically, it had been Nixon's anything-but-public-affairs policy, combined with the requirement to raise private funding, that had created both elitist perception and a donor-dependent reality. That attempt too was met with fierce political lobbying, but efforts succeeded in restoring only one year of the rescinded funding. Ever since, public TV officials have shown up regularly in Congress, with hat in hand, begging for funds that don't even match, in real dollars, earlier appropriations.

As lobbying training sessions in Dallas emphasized, if public TV staffers could mobilize their viewers to pressure legislators, Congress would have a much stronger reason to support the service. But few stations have been able to muster the organization or support. Many viewers, it seems, regard public TV as a pleasant service but not a truly public one. —P.A.



# Parliament

Continued from page 11

ament, the Commission and the Council is complex. In 1979, direct election of the five-year Parliament was introduced as a measure to gain popular acceptance of the EC. Since then, the Parliament has been granted certain limited powers with a view to solidifying the Single Market due to be instituted by 1993.

The paradox is that even parliamentarians initially hostile to strengthening the institutional power of the Community tend to find themselves fighting to strengthen the Parliament against the Council—a battle that, if successful, would reinforce the Community. The fight against the EC's evident "democratic deficit" almost inevitably takes this form, as elected members realize that, in any case, the Commission is exercising enough power to attract the solicitations of some 4,000 lobbies.

The Greens, as the second-largest group on the left side of the Parliament, are sometimes able to play the role of catalyst. The Socialists are inhibited by proximity to power, and the two Communist groups are demoralized, each in its own way. The Greens have been able to stimulate debate and occasionally get left MEPs to take stronger positions than they would have otherwise, especially regarding Third World development policy. This is an area where the European Green group has invested a large share of its effort, stressing the urgent need for a new development model. Greens are helping revive flagging solidarity with Third World peoples on new grounds: concern for preservation of human life and environment from the ravages of uncontrolled world market growth.

Use the Calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is **\$25.00 for one insertion, \$35.00 for two insertions and \$15.00 for each additional insert**, for copy of 50 words or less (additional words are 50¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of ITT Calendar.

## THE SOUTH

June 24-July 4

A SOUTHERN AFRICAN-AMERICAN LEADERSHIP TOUR. Venues: Dallas, Shreveport, Lafayette, Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Montgomery, Atlanta, Memphis, Mary Esther, Pensacola, St. Louis and Kansas City. Oba T'Shaka, author of *The Political Legacy of Malcolm X* and *The Art of Leadership*, featured speaker. Dates still available. For complete information and particular locations per city: (504) 356-0076.

## NEW YORK

July 3-27

THE NEW YORK MARXIST SCHOOL THEATRE WORKSHOPS WITH AUGUSTO BOAL: Theatre and Social Change; Tuesday, July 3-Sunday, July 8, 1-6 p.m.; \$500. Designed for people involved in creating bridges between theatre and community activism. THEATRE AND THERAPY; Tuesday, July 10-Sunday, July 15, 1-6 p.m. \$500. Designed for workers in the mental health and human services professions.

SUMMER INTENSIVE IN MARXIST THEORY AND PRACTICE: Monday, July 16-Friday, July 27, 6:30-9:30 p.m.; and Saturday, July 21, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The summer intensive is an opportunity to immerse yourself in Marxist theory and meet activists from all over the U.S. and the world. Tuition: \$200; limited scholarships. For further information, contact the New York Marxist School, 79 Leonard St. New York, NY 10011, (212) 941-0332.

July 21-22

REDISCOVERING THE AMERICAS: 1992 AND BEYOND. The official celebrations of the 500th anniversary of Columbus' "discovery" are almost certain to downplay or ignore the real impact of European conquest—the near-extermination of indigenous peoples, the enslavement of Africans, the emigration of poor and disenfranchised Europeans. Join us for a day of information-sharing, networking and strategizing so we can develop a multicultural response to the "official story," plan our own commemorations and explore our visions for a future based on cultural diversity and mutual respect. At Union Theological Seminary, Broadway and 120th

## CALENDAR

St. For more information contact Columbus In Context: Rediscovering the Americas, c/o Clergy and Laity Concerned, 198 Broadway, NYC 10038, (212) 964-6730.

## CONWAY, NH

July 6-19

Join us this summer at the World Fellowship Peace Center on 300 acres in the White Mountains for our 50th season of dialogue and renewal for all persons committed to building a just social and economic order, free from racism, sexism and militarism. The following programs are being offered at a 20% discount: JULY 6-12, CHINA-PAST AND FUTURE, a seminar featuring prominent Chinese and American scholars enhanced by Tai Chi classes, Chinese food and films. JULY 13-19, COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO CURRENT URBAN CULTURE, a seminar featuring Gus Newport, former mayor of Berkeley, CA, now working on a neighborhood initiative in Boston; Can Chordokoff of the Institute for Social Ecology, and other urban activists responding to development and urban blight; and daytime classes in nature photography. Call or write Christopher and Kathryn Schmauch, Directors, World Fellowship, R.D. Box 136, Conway, NH 03818, (603) 447-2280.

## CHICAGO

July 13-14

Pledge of Resistance National Convention, July 13-14, 1990; Chicago (De Paul University). Participate in setting the political priorities, program and overall direction of Pledge of Resistance for 1991. Learn from /share with Central American activists from around the country, participate in workshops, hear well-respected speakers, be prepared for some fun! Call (202) 328-4040 or write National Pledge of Resistance, P.O. Box 53411-3411, Washington, DC 20009-3411.

## BURLINGTON, VT

July 25-30

EMPOWERMENT: INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY - Association for Humanistic Psychology 28th Annual Conference, with Rollo May, Ilana Rubinfeld, Thomas Szasz, Marvin Weisbord; Maureen O'Hara, David Gershon, George Albee, Michelle Weiner-Davis and 105 other speakers with professional and personal empowerment workshops for therapists, social workers, teachers, nurses, businesspeople, consultants, students and anyone. Call (802) 656-2088 for brochure.

## BRYN MAWR, PA

August 3-5

CELEBRATION OF CONSCIENCE—a gathering commemorating 50 years of continuing witness against war, and the witness must never end! Dave Dellinger, Eva Michel, Parren Mitchell speaking, Holly Near singing. Regional conferences are scheduled in Indiana, Kansas and the West Coast. Associated events, meetings, exhibits and publications are also scheduled. For free information and registration materials, contact Celebration of Conscience, Suite 750, 1601 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20009-1035, (202) 483-4514.

## HESPERIA, MI

August 17-19

RED OAK CONFERENCE at Camp Keewano. Workshops: Electoral Politics, National Health, Native Americans, Reproductive Rights, The Labor Movement, Socialist Ecology, The Market in a Planned Society; music, poetry, oral history. For information: Socialist Party USA, 516 W. 25th St., New York, NY 10001, (212) 691-0776 or (616) 861-5505.

## ROCK HILL, NY

August 23-26

WORKING PEOPLE AND THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT: Union for Radical Political Economics 1990 Summer Conference at Camp Sequoia in Rock Hill, NY (2 hours from New York City). PLENARY SESSIONS: Ecology and the Left, Eastern Europe: The Road to What?, The Health Care Crisis and AIDS, The Assault on African-American Communities and the Resistance. Speakers include: Jens Christiansen, Ward Churchill, Alexander Cockburn, Phil Hill, Ynestra King, Joanne Landy, Harry Magdoff, Barbara Omlade, Stephanie Poggi, Yolanda Serrano. CLASSES: "Gender Analysis," Teresa Amott; "Popular Economics," The Center for Popular Economics; "Labor History," Dana Frank; "Choosing Class and Over-Determination: New Directions in Marxian Economics," Richard Wolff and Stephen Resnick. Cultural, recreational activity and childcare included. Write: URPE National Office, Dept. of Economics, University of California, Riverside, CA 92521, or phone (714) 787-3538.

## TUCSON, AZ

October 16-18

MANAGING WILDLIFE IN THE SOUTHWEST SYMPOSIUM. Topics include habitat management, game and nongame species. Paul R. Krausman or Norman S. Smith, 325 Biological Sciences East, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ, (602) 621-3845.

# IT WASN'T HIS DRIVING THAT CAUSED THE ALASKAN OIL SPILL. IT WAS YOURS.

It would be easy to blame the Valdez oil spill on one man. Or one company. Or even one industry.

Too easy. Because the truth is, the spill was caused by a nation drunk on oil. And a government asleep at the wheel.

Immediately after the Valdez spill, the administration said it was an isolated incident. Tell that to the people in Texas, Rhode Island, and Delaware who have all had to deal with oil spills of their own since the Valdez.

What it comes down to is this: As long as we are dependent on fossil fuels and wasteful of the oil we have, more offshore drilling and disastrous oil spills are inevitable.

But together we can curb our nation's dependency on oil.



We can shelve Bush's plan to lease the continental shelf to offshore drillers in places like Alaska's Bristol Bay, Florida's Coral Reef, North Carolina's Outer Banks, New England's Georges Bank, and the entire California Coastline.

We can put pressure on Washington to tighten auto efficiency standards and restore the funding for renewable energy sources that Reagan took away.

We can convince U.S. automakers to stop pushing large cars and muscle cars, and get back to marketing more fuel efficient automobiles.

Together, we can put the brakes on our nation's oil dependency before it's too late.

## GREENPEACE

1436 U Street NW, Washington, DC 20009

### THE DR. SCIENCE "SMUG MUG"

This bright yellow mug is just the advantage that you'll need to wrestle the 90's to the ground! On one side, our adorable series mascot; the other side proudly proclaims: "I KNOW MORE THAN YOU DO!" in big, bold letters. A must for any desk! Set of two: \$17.95 ppd



I KNOW MORE THAN YOU DO!

### THE DUCK'S BREATH MULTI-MEDIA KIT

Prepare yourself for sensory overload! Includes: the SPACEDUCK teeshirt (White on Bright Red, S/M/L/XL); the mile-a-minute comic novel IAN SHOALES' PERFECT WORLD ("...the most fun of its kind since The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy." -Booklist); our newest 90-min. comedy cassette, SENSELESS CRUELTY; and a DUCK'S BREATH bumpersticker. WOW, all at a savings of 30%! Only \$21.95 ppd



### ZADARI COW FROM HELL

Featuring our very own slightly befuddled and highly radioactive cow from hell. 100% Cotton Teeshirt. S/M/L/XL \$12.95 ppd



### HOMEMADE RADIO

"The funniest 90 seconds on radio!" - L. A. Times Cass. 43 min. \$8.95 ppd

### IAN SHOALES' PERFECT WORLD

A day in the fantasy life of America's super-cynical "Seer of Sneer" Chicago Sun Times. 203pp \$9.95 ppd

## ORDER DIRECTLY FROM PUBLIC RADIO'S LEADING FUNNY GUYS!

Please send Check, Money Order, or Credit Card info to: DUCK'S BREATH Dept. INT P.O. BOX 22513 SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94122 or charge by phone: (415) 621-2725 M-F / 9am-6pm pacific time All prices Postpaid. VISA / MC / DINERS accepted.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_



## HELP WANTED

**COMMUNITY JOBS**, socially responsible job opportunities. Subscribe to the only monthly nationwide listing covering peace & justice, civil rights, unions, consumer advocacy, organizing, social work and more. \$12/6 issues. **COMMUNITY JOBS**, 1601 Connecticut Ave. NW, 6th Floor, Washington, DC 20009.

The Central American Labor Defense Network seeks a half-time **COORDINATOR** for its urgent action network in defense of Central American unionists. Writing and organizing skills required. Some knowledge of U.S. labor movement and Central America preferred. Contact **CALDN Search Committee**, Box 28014, Oakland, CA 94604, (415) 272-9951.

**UNION REPRESENTATIVE/ORGANIZER**: Progressive 5,000-member local has an opening for full-time staff representative/organizer. Experience in organizing and grievance/discipline handling preferred. Salary and benefits highly competitive. Minorities and women encouraged to apply. Send resume to: Search Committee, 321 W. State St., 2nd Floor, Trenton, NJ 08618.

**UNION ORGANIZER WANTED**. Canvassing, community organizing or union organizing desired. To do internal organizing for growing progressive union in California. Positions available in San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles area. Send resume to: Nadya Floyd Wilson, 440 Grand Ave., #250, Oakland, CA 94610. Minority candidates strongly urged to apply.

Chicago church-based ecumenical peace and justice education group seeks **FULL-TIME COORDINATOR**. Modest stipend. Shalom Education, (312) 363-2020.

**SOCIALIST ENTREPRENEUR** seeks partners and investors interested in organizing ambitious yet highly democratic non-profit and limited-profit enterprises. (312) 743-6130.

**UNION ORGANIZER**—Highly motivated organizer with excellent interpersonal skills needed for campaign involving clericals and other support staff on major university campus. Responsibilities include one-on-one organizing, recruiting and training volunteers, and facilitating meetings. Send resume to Ed Ramthun, AFSCME, 1001 S. Wright St., Champaign, IL 61820.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**, social change foundation. Must have 3 to 5 years experience in fundraising, major donor solicitation, nonprofit administration. Travel required in five-state region. Send resume to: A Territory Resource, 603 Stewart #221, Seattle, WA 98101 by July 15.

## PUBLICATIONS

**GAY COMMUNITY NEWS**, Since 1973, the only national newsweekly covering lesbian and gay life and liberation. Each week GCN brings you the liveliest mix of news, analysis and entertainment around, as well as a monthly Book Review Supplement and special issues on topics ranging from new gay male per-

This publication is available in microform from University Microfilms International.

Call toll-free 800-321-3044. In Michigan, Alaska and Hawaii call collect 313-761-4700. Or mail inquiry to: University Microfilms International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.



## GIVE ME CONDOMS

The Reimer Foundation organizes the free distribution of Condoms, Posters, Videos, and Owners Manuals—all the hows and whys of using them. Take care of yourself and the people you care for. Play, But Play Safe. Latex, Nonoxynol-9 coated Condoms are \$45.00 for 500, \$80.00 for 1,000. For free distribution ONLY.

For more information, write:  
**The Reimer Foundation**  
606 W. Barry, #300  
Chicago, IL 60657

THE **REIMER** FOUNDATION

or call: 1-312-935-SAFE  
The Reimer Foundation is a non-profit corporation dedicated to stopping AIDS now.

# C L A S S I F I E D S

formers to lesbian safer sex. 1 year, \$33; 6 months, \$20. GCN Subscriptions, 62 Berkeley St., Boston, MA 02116.

**ALTERNATIVE PRESS INDEX: TOOL FOR SOCIAL CHANGE**. API is an invaluable tool for your study of social change. 250 alternative & radical publications indexed. Ask the folks at your library to subscribe. \$125/institutions, \$30/individuals. Write Alternative Press Center, P.O. Box 33109, Baltimore, MD 21218 for more information.

**1990-91 DIRECTORY OF ALTERNATIVE & RADICAL PUBLICATIONS**. Over 300 periodicals listed, \$3.00. Write: Alternative Press Center, P.O. Box 33109, Baltimore, MD 21218.

**FREE MARIJUANA** book and magazine catalog. Over 50 books and periodicals available. Read drug information by freelance and professional journalists which the mainstream news media consciously ignore. Send for free catalog; New Moon Publishing, P.O. Box 1027, Corvallis, OR 97339, (800) 888-6785.

**JEWISH CURRENTS**, June 1990 issue. "American Jews Criticizing Israeli Policies," editorial; "Why Socialism Now?" a symposium; "Jewish Fiction Roundup," Roger B. Goodman; "From Old Left to New Left," A.B. Magill; "Aaron Kramer and Our Yiddish Heritage," Max Rosenfeld. Single issue: \$2. Subscription: \$20 yearly (USA) **JEWISH CURRENTS**, Dept. T, Suite 601, 22 E. 17th St., New York, NY 10003.

Socialist biweekly. Since 1891. \$4/year. **THE PEOPLE (ITT)**, Box 50218, Palo Alto, CA 94303.

**STUDY/WORK/LIVE OVERSEAS!** Since 1977 **TRANSITIONS ABROAD** has helped socially responsible travelers plan their overseas adventures. One-year subscription includes five issues, *Educational/Travel Directory* plus *FREE Guide to Living Overseas* (if prepaid). **TRANSITIONS ABROAD**, Box 344-3015, Amherst, MA 01004.

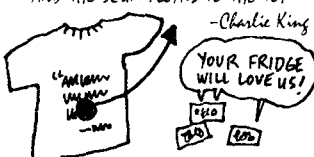
## SEEN ANY CLIPS LATELY?

We are collecting references to *In These Times* made by other publications—quotations, excerpts, critiques, etc. If you see such a mention, please help us out by sending a copy to:

**Gregory L. Walker**  
ITT  
2040 N. Milwaukee Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60647

Postcards and T-Shirts for the Overqualified!

"AMERICA IS LIKE A MELTING POT—THE PEOPLE AT THE BOTTOM GET BURNED AND THE SCUM FLOATS TO THE TOP"



Philosophy, psychology, cats, American Leftists (gulp!) and much more lampooned by Jennifer Berman.

For your almost free catalog of goodies, please send 75c in stamps to:  
Humerus Cartoons • Jennifer Berman  
P.O. Box 6614 • Evanston, IL • 60204-6614

**REDWING BLACKBIRD ANARCHIST CATALOG**. Box 2042, Decatur, GA 30031-2042, \$1.

**PRESIDENTIAL BIOGRAPHIES**. Send. 25¢ stamp for monthly listing of available titles. New and out-of-print books. American Political Biography, I-39, Boggs Hill Rd., Newton, CT 06470.

**FREE CATALOG** of herbs, books, powders, incenses, other related items. Write to Papa Jim, S. Box 14128, San Antonio, TX 78214, (512) 922-6665.

**BOOKS**  
"ANARCHIST COOKBOOK"—Available again! \$22, postpaid. Barricade Books, Box 1401-J, Secaucus, NJ 07096.

**LEFT THRILLERS/SOCIAL MYSTERIES**. Free catalogue. SASE to Eurobooks, Box 15179, Portland, OR 97215.

**EDUCATION**  
**UNIVERSITY DEGREES WITHOUT CLASSES**—bachelor's, master's, doctorate: Many well-known universities offer accredited degrees entirely by mail, which you can earn while remaining fully employed. Learn about this economical, accelerated way to earn your degree. No classroom studies. Credit toward degree given for prior accomplishments and work experience. For free brochure, write to: Dr. John Bear, P.O. Box 826-NT, Benicia, CA 94510.

**SPANISH STUDY**  
SPANISH in Mexico. Escuela Azteca: summer, Cuernavaca. Live with a Mexican family. Study with Professor Ross Gandy (Marx and History, Mexico 1910-

**NICARAGUA'S VIEWPOINT:**  
*Barricada Internacional*  
biweekly news from Managua  
\$35/year; \$18/6 mo.  
Sample free!  
Barricada USA-I, P.O. Box  
410150, S.F., CA 94141



## POT OF GREEN FLORIST

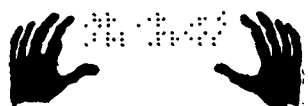
Stonington, CT  
"Your Progressive Florist"  
Wires & Ships Plants  
& Flowers Inexpensively  
outside CT: (800) 338-4425  
inside CT: (203) 535-4302

## BECOME AN IN THESE TIMES SUSTAINER

Our Sustainers actively support **IN THESE TIMES** by donating on a monthly or quarterly basis. Plus, all new Sustainers receive two (free) six-month gift subscriptions! Sustainers who pledge a minimum of \$10 per month or \$25 per quarter also receive their **IN THESE TIMES** subscription free of charge. For information on enrollment, contact:

**Kevin O'Donnell**  
ITT  
2040 N. Milwaukee Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60647

## The Our Right to Know Braille Press, Inc.



For blind and print-handicapped persons, selected articles from **IN THESE TIMES** are included in **FREEDOM IDEAS INTERNATIONAL (FI)**, a quarterly review of minority and independent Left publications, produced by the Our Right to Know Braille Press, Inc., on 4-track 15/16 ips cassette tape. A 4-issue subscription to FI costs \$5. Send to: Our Right To Know Braille Press, Inc. 640 Bayside, Detroit, MI 48217, (313) 842-1804.

1982). Spanish three levels. Aztecs, Mayas, Juarez, Mexican Revolution. Tours of pyramids, revolutionary murals. \$170 each two weeks. Brochure: Escuela Azteca, Rio Usumacinta 710, Guernavaca, Mexico, (73) 15-24-69.

**VIDEO**  
**FILM CLASSICS**. Send SASE for free catalog to STAR RECORDING, 2765 W. 5th St., Brooklyn, NY 11224.

**TRAVEL**  
**EUROPE THIS SUMMER?** Jet there from the East Coast—\$160, from the West Coast—\$269, or \$229 from anywhere else. **AIRHITCH®**, (212) 864-2000.

**NEW AGE**  
Are **JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES** still knocking on your door? Does the maze of religion in the world today have you confused? Order "The New Age Tract Portfolio" covering all your informational needs. Only \$29.99. Send check or money order with \$2 postage and handling to: Zion Enterprises, Dept. 2, 275 Salem St., Lawrence, MA 01843.

**FOR RENT**  
**HUMBOLDT PARK** (Chicago), bright, 3-bedroom, 6-room apartment on quiet street. Cabinet kitchen, forced-air heat, ceiling fans, natural woodwork, large yard and basement. \$425 plus utilities. Available 8/1/90. Call (312) 276-6754.



copy paper • envelopes • computer paper  
napkins • printing paper • paper towels  
toilet paper • facial tissue

For Catalog, Send \$1 To:  
**A.R.P., Box 11021, Baltimore, MD 21212**

## WORKSHOPS

**CONSENSUS-FACILITATION:** Caroline Estes leads workshops Sept. 14-20, Jan. 11-17, May '91. Brochure: Alpha, Deadwood, OR 97430.


**PERSONALS**  
**CONCERNED SINGLES NEWSLETTER** links left singles, nationwide. Free sample. P.O. Box 555-T, Stockbridge, MA 01262.

**NATIONWIDE SINGLES PHOTO MAGAZINE**. Send: name, address, age. Send no money. Exchange, 1817 Welton, #1580-BA, Denver, CO 80202.

**IT'S TIME** to celebrate life, explore these times, and gather strength for actions ahead. I would enjoy sharing a month of unstructured travel in early 1991 with a women with passion for justice, love for nature, and a sense of adventure. Steven, Box 8854, Santa Fe, NM 87504.

**MISCELLANEOUS**  
**ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING** titles of nobility. Colonel Kerrigan Scott, 10 Windflower Court, Hilton Head Plantation, SC 29926.

**EAT HOMEMADE COOKIES—LOSE WEIGHT!** Free details, send SASE to Dr. Tom Lyman, 491 S. Main, Cedar City, UT 84720.



Nuclear War  
It's not the heat  
it's the humidity

**T-shirts**  
\$11  
Post Paid  
**M-L-XL**  
Other designs:  
Dyslexics  
of the World  
Unite; JP  
sartre For  
Beard Nothingness Decaf;  
Swine Coolers; Terrier  
Barking Water; MORE

Send 50¢ for catalogue  
of cards and T-shirts  
to **CARD ATTACK-Box**  
**10264 Chicago, 60610-0264**

# IN THESE TIMES Classified Ads Grab Attention

...and work like your own sales force.  
Your message will reach **128,000 responsive readers each week** (89% made a mail order purchase last year). **ITT classies deliver a big response for a little cost.**

## Word Rates:

95¢ per word / 1 or 2 issues  
85¢ per word / 3-5 issues  
80¢ per word / 6-9 issues  
75¢ per word / 10-19 issues  
65¢ per word / 20 or more issues

## Display Inch Rates:

\$30 per inch / 1 or 2 issues  
\$28 per inch / 3-5 issues  
\$26 per inch / 6-9 issues  
\$24 per inch / 10-19 issues  
\$22 per inch / 20 or more issues

All classified ads must be prepaid. Ad deadline is Friday, 12 days before the date of publication. All issues dated on Wednesday.

Enclosed is my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ week(s).

Please indicate desired heading \_\_\_\_\_

Advertiser \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: **IN THESE TIMES**, Classified Ads, 2040 N. Milwaukee, Chicago, IL 60647.



By Julie Becker

In my mind, they'll always be in second grade—a group of little seven-year-olds frozen in time. Although more than 20 years have passed, I still see David's big blue eyes,

Richard's eager expression and Patty's mischievous grin. I still see the whole crew in front of me.

It was the fall of 1969, and I was teaching in a small neighborhood school in a suburb west of Boston—a school known for its warmth and hometown spirit. It was my first year in the system, and since our nation was in turmoil over Vietnam, I was careful not to be rebellious—at least initially.

The kids were largely a silly group, typical for their age. They were live wires who liked to tell funny stories and giggle. They were curious about people and the world around them and were surprisingly insightful with their questions. Yet something happened when they said the Pledge of Allegiance every morning and, quite honestly, it annoyed me.

In the short time I'd known them, I'd come to appreciate their energy. I loved to have discussions with them, and I found their ideas refreshing. But all their liveliness withered away when they droned, "I pledge allegiance to the flag."

No longer were they spunky seven-year-olds—they were dull, mindless androids. **Learning the words:** One day, as the kids settled down in their seats, I told them we were going to skip saying "The Pledge" for a few days because they obviously didn't know what the words

meant. As a case in point, I asked them to define the word "pledge" and the best answer I got was, "It's something you say."

To get them unmuddled, I assigned them one word a day to take home and study. And the next morning we'd have a discussion about that word—what it meant and why it was important. As the days went by, we unraveled the mysteries behind "allegiance," "united," "republic" and the ever-so-fractured "indivisible."

By the time we got to the word "justice," I figured my mission was accomplished—but I was wrong. Just when I thought we were done, a precocious little girl named Suzy expressed misgivings. "Now that I know what 'The Pledge' means," she said, "I don't want to say it. Do I have to?"

Believing that mandatory recitations were terribly out of place in a democratic society, I was secretly pleased by her response. I told her that neither the school nor the government could force

her to speak against her will, and that she and everyone else in the room were free to make their own decisions regarding the flag.

Of course, this left me with another dilemma—what to do about morning exercises. But the solution turned out to be right in front of me.

There was a clunky, rattletrap piano in our classroom, out of tune but functional. I used to bang out George M. Cohan songs and have the kids sing along. They liked "Yankee Doodle Dandy" and "Over There," but their hands-down favorite was "You're a Grand Old Flag."

With this in mind, I taped a sign-up sheet to my desk. I told the children that whoever wanted to be a morning leader could pick a date, and when it arrived, he or she would be in charge of opening the day. I pretty much gave them

carte blanche, suggesting they could sing a song, lead The Pledge, read a poem or discuss current events.

By far the most popular choice was to sing "You're a Grand Old Flag." Second on the list was reciting The Pledge. Once in a while, a couple of kids would opt not to say it, but I never thought to question their patriotism.

**Voices carry:** During the summer of 1988, I was getting ready to move to a new house and was sorting through my belongings. Fumbling around in a box, I found a reel of tape without a label. I plunked it on my machine and soon heard my second-graders from the past singing "You're a Grand Old Flag."

The timing was odd. It was late July and the presidential race was sinking to new lows, with one contender especially making a mockery of the flag. And there I sat listening to a group of seven-year-old children singing with pure exuberance. There was no hollowness in their voices. They were young vaudevillians who sang out of sheer joy, not because someone told them "good little Americans" love the flag.

I packed away the tape that evening, but I still hear their voices. I hear their voices even though the children behind them are now nearly 30 years old. I hear their voices when I think of the dramatic quest for freedom we've witnessed in Eastern Europe, weirdly juxtaposed with the simpleminded hysteria that flag-burning has produced in America.

Watching these events unfold, I've often found myself drifting back to my old classroom in Massachusetts. The school I taught in was closed in 1978 and has since been converted to apartments for the elderly, but my second-graders are still there in my imagination, singing "You're a Grand Old Flag" and asking lots of questions.

**Once more, with feeling:** If somehow I could take today's drama back to the past, I know the kids and I would have some wonderful discussions.

We would talk about swinging sledgehammers at the Berlin Wall, and how it felt to escape repression and finally be free.

We would talk about the innate goodness of democracy as being far more precious than flags or apple pie.

We would talk about how lucky we were to have freedom of speech, freedom of religion and, yes, the freedom to dissent.

We would point out that adults who burn flags are like children who throw tantrums—that both are seeking attention and are, therefore, best ignored.

We would acknowledge that flag burning was disgraceful but would hardly consider it a national crisis.

And we would wonder why so many politicians were willing to desecrate the Bill of Rights by passing a constitutional amendment—an amendment that clearly skirted reason and tolerance yet smacked of political opportunism.

If I could go back and meet with my second-graders for just one day, I'd ask them to sing "You're a Grand Old Flag," and I know they'd do so with gusto. But before I went to the piano, I'd remind them that the flag was merely a symbol—and that it was the principles behind the flag that were really so grand.

Julie Becker is a writer living in Vermont.

## Close to the Pledge

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible with liberty and justice

for all.